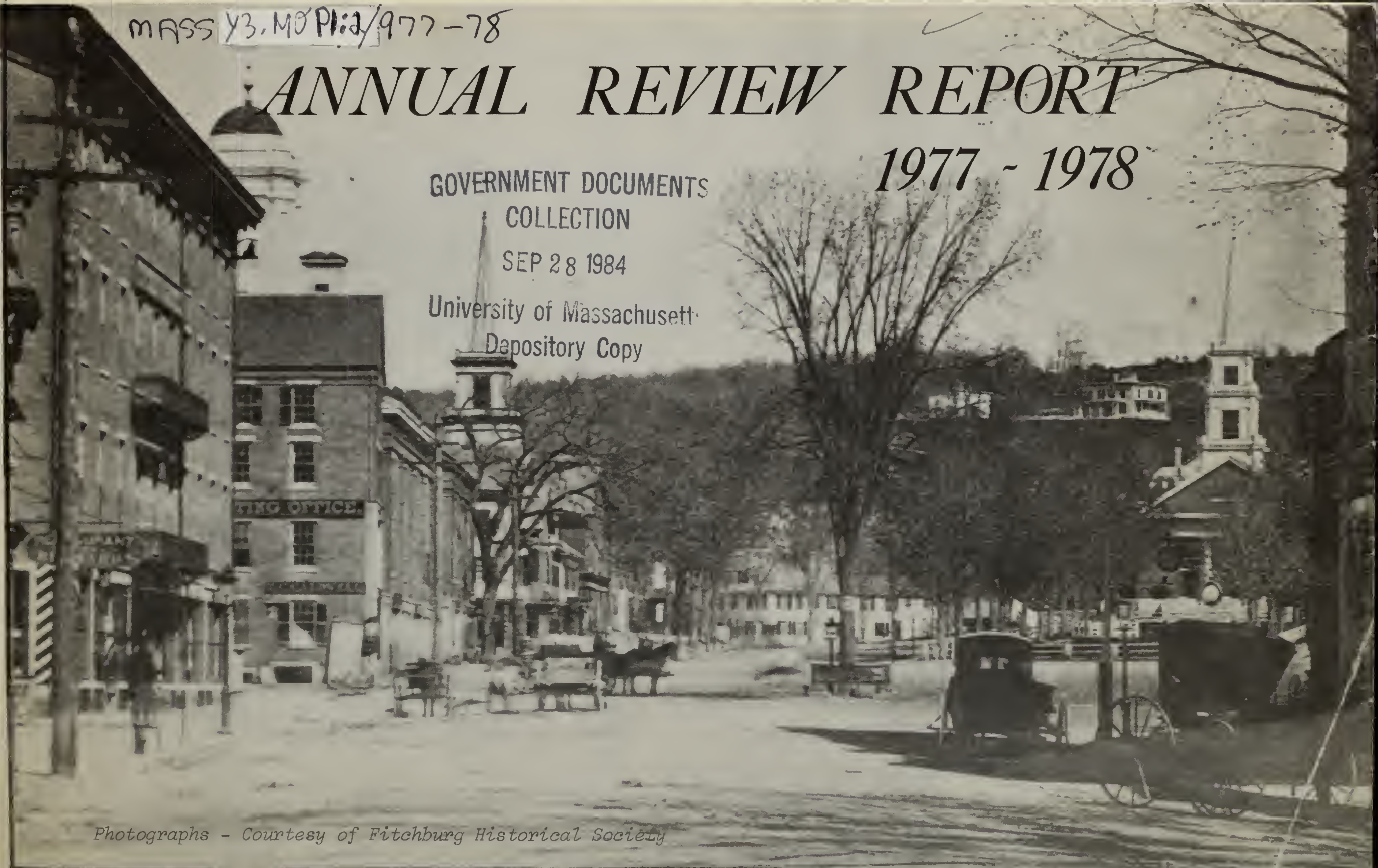

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ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT

1977 - 1978

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION
SEP 28 1984
University of Massachusett
Depository Copy

Photographs - Courtesy of Fitchburg Historical Society

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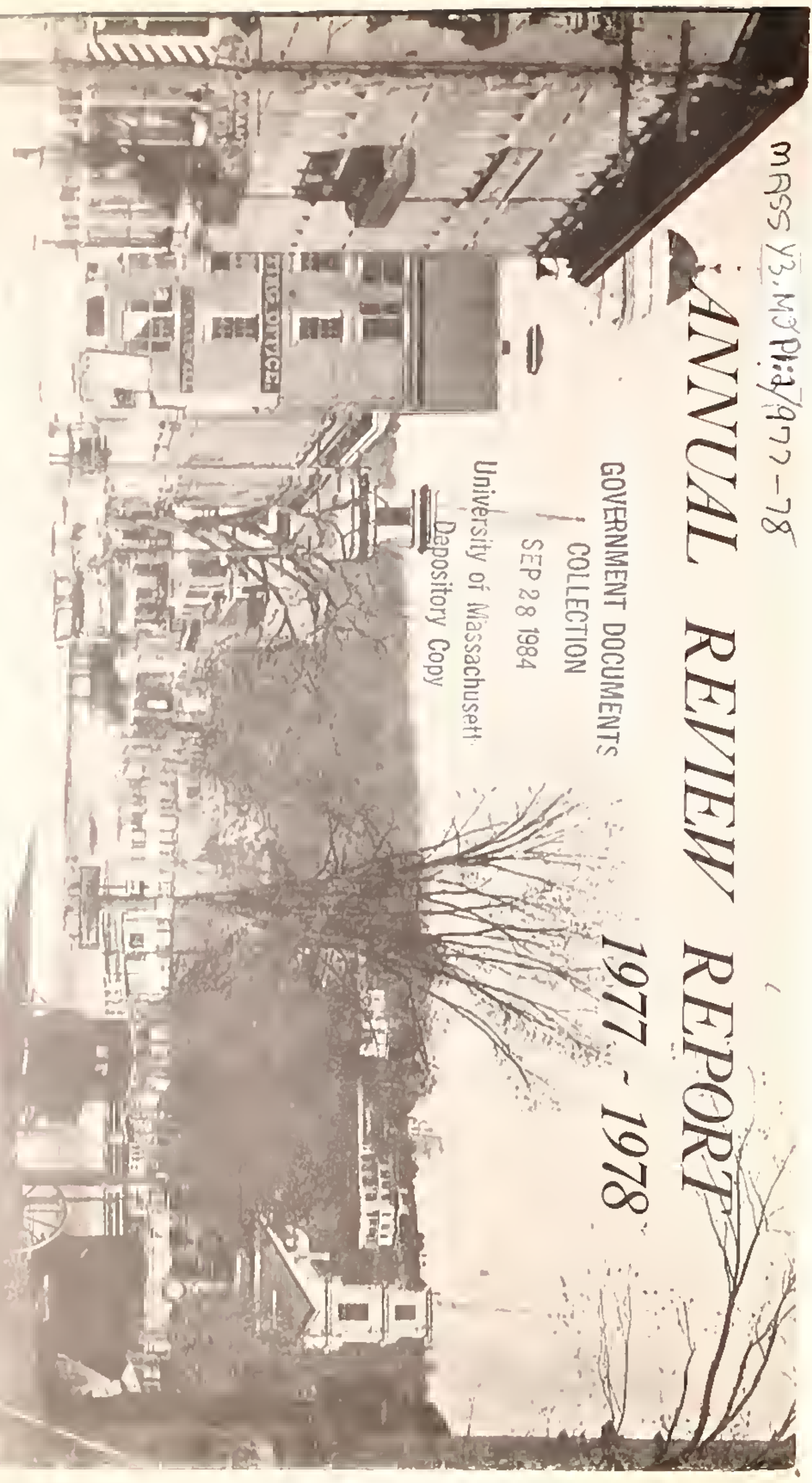
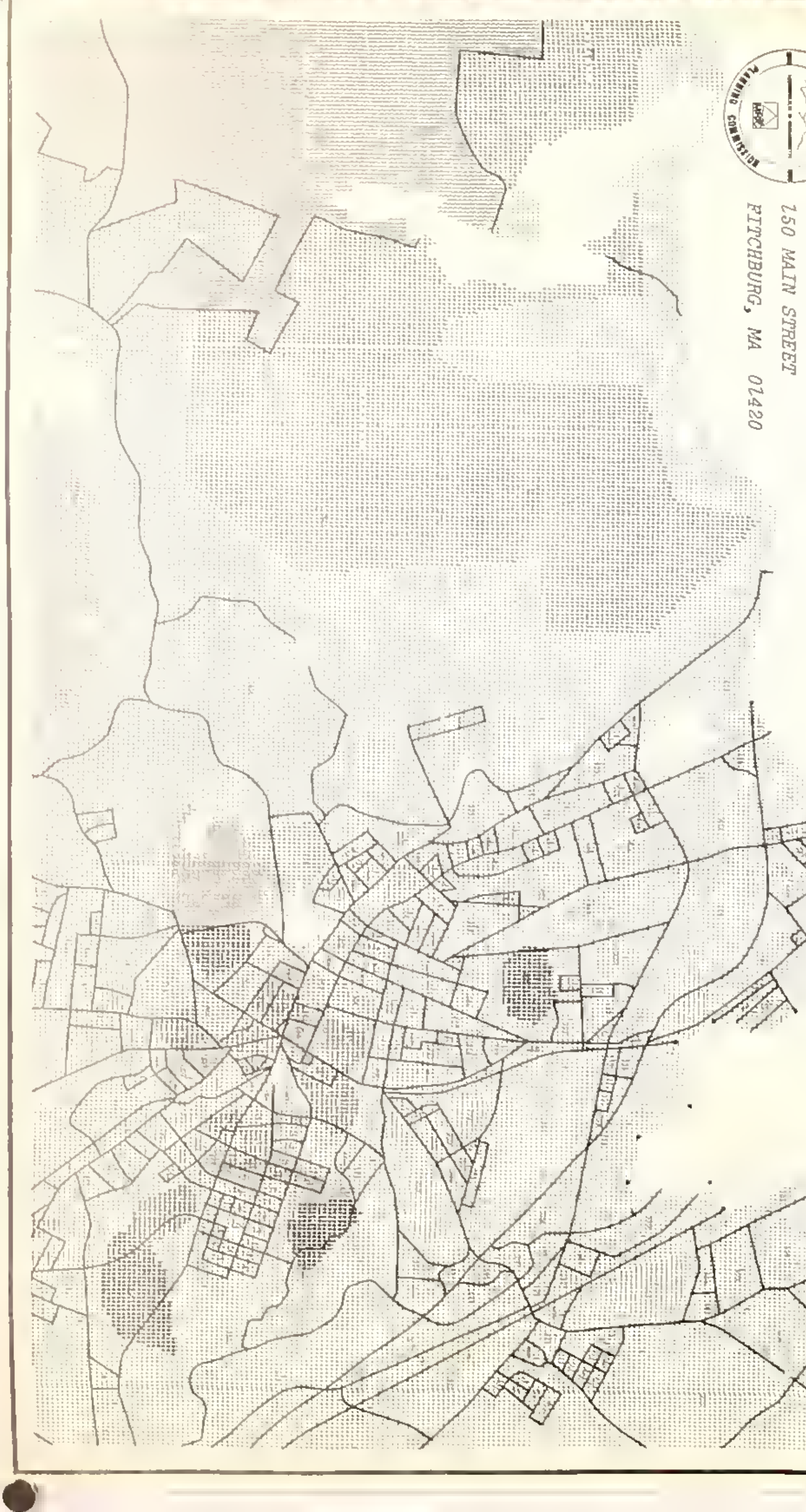


Photographs - courtesy of Fitchburg Historical Society

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
150 MAIN STREET
FITCHBURG, MA 01420

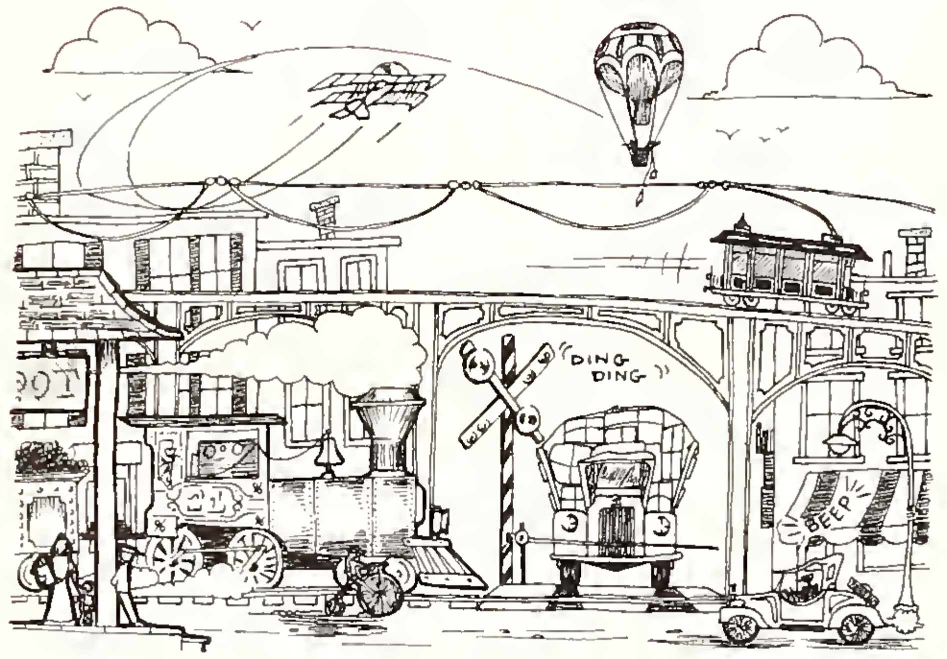


TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Presently, the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission is engaged in the development of a Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan. The Plan will consist of two major elements - a Long Range Element and a Transportation Systems Management Element. The Long Range Element will define the long range transportation needs of the region and identify new transportation policies and facilities or major changes in existing facilities.

The Transportation System Management Element is designed to meet short-range transportation needs. Improved management of existing facilities increases their traffic efficiency. Efficiency is accomplished through integration of traffic operations; improvements such as channelization of traffic flow (TOPICS Program); safety improvements; and coordination of all forms of traffic systems.

This past year has seen the collection of socio-economic and traffic related data, along with the development of various methodologies and techniques for developing a highway systems model for the Montachusett Region. This model, once operational, will be used to project vehicle travel patterns for the years 1985, 1995, and 2005. Additionally, the model results will provide information on air pollution levels and user costs. Overall, this will be a tool available for determining the traffic impacts of future land use development and roadway construction changes in the Montachusett Region.



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Through the transportation planning process, the transportation improvements are recommended for development into proposed projects by the MJTC and the community. This process is performed on a continuing basis as projects reach the construction stage. Prioritization reflects the Region's needs for that particular transportation improvement. Projects are then implemented through the following phases: Corridor Planning Studies (CPS) (where applicable), Preliminary Engineering Phase (PE), Right-of-Way (ROW), and construction.

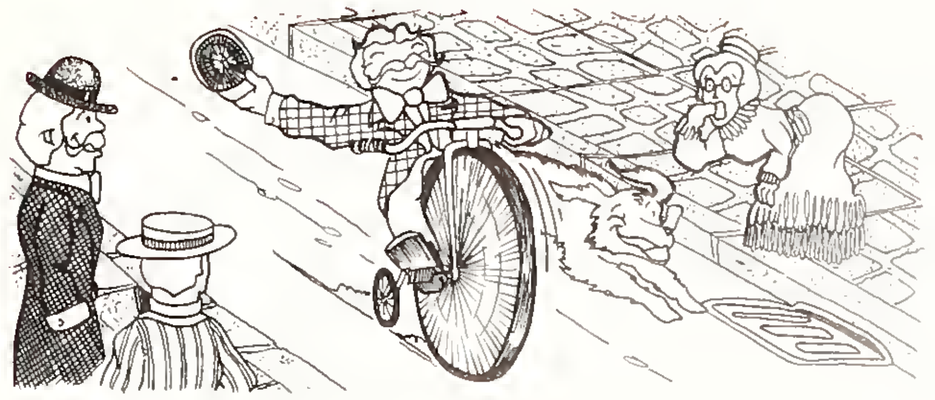
TIP 1978 PRIORITIES

The Fiscal Year 1978 TIP lists the following overall Regional Priorities:

1A....I-190
1.....Route 2 Improvements
2.....Gardner-Westminster Route 140
3.....2/13 Interchange Improvements
4.....Route 101, Templeton
5.....Fitchburg Connector
6.....Clinton Connector
7.....Route 110-111, Harvard
8.....Route 31, Ashby
9.....Matthews Street, Gardner
10....Laurel Street, Putnam Street, and Kimball Street, Fitchburg
11....John Fitch Highway, Fitchburg
12....Groton-Shirley Road, Ayer
13....Route 68, Hubbardston
14....Barre Road, Templeton
15....Betty Spring Road Bridge, Gardner
16....Fisher Road, Fitchburg
17....Ashburnham Hill Road, Scott Road, Rindge Road, Fitchburg
18....Harvard Street - Reconstruction, Leominster
19....Industrial Crawford Road Extension, Fitchburg-Leominster
20....Route 2A, Lunenburg

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING IN THE MONTACHUSETT REGION

The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) is a transportation policy advisory group for the Montachusett Region which provides a forum for an ongoing transportation planning process for the 17 MRPC communities plus Harvard (see map insert). MRPC maintains a consistent analysis of existing travel conditions, transportation facilities, and management of transportation systems. The MRPC is responsible for comprehensive planning including transportation planning as defined in Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws. MJTC evaluates alternative transportation system improvements to promote efficiency of existing transportation resources. MRPC promotes transportation planning that is consistent with and integrated into the region's comprehensive long range land use, urban development, environmental protection policy, and energy conservation goals. MRPC also monitors and forecasts the region's economic, social, and land use activities in view of potential transportation demands.

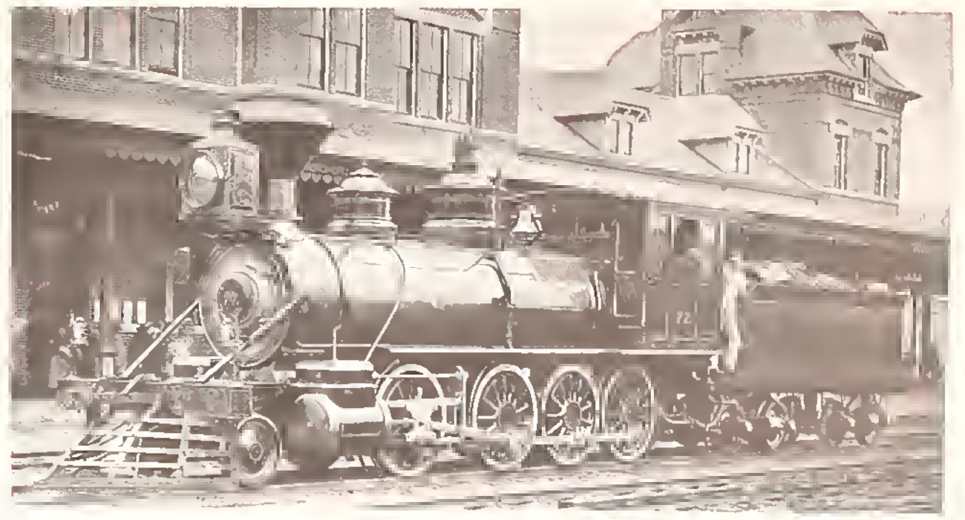


BIKEWAYS

The bikeway planning process is aimed at using the resources of local towns, the MRPC and State Agencies in an efficient way by avoiding duplication of effort through coordination of plans on a regional level. Basically, the bikeway planning purpose is to assist towns in preparing and implementing bikeway plans, and to ensure compliance with regulations which apply when federal and/or state funding is requested.

Groups interested in bikeway construction should contact their town officials who will notify the MRPC of the proposed route. The MRPC's staff will then assist the interested group in developing a bikeway plan through a series of meetings and workshops involving the interested group, local officials, and interested citizens affected by the proposal. The meetings are generally informational and are aimed at explaining the various phases of the planning process, as well as discussion of methods of gathering information, consideration of specific problems and opportunities, establishment of goals, and analyzation of various alternative proposals. When this process is completed, the proposed plan is reviewed by the MJTC and given a priority listing placing it in competition for funds with other proposed bikeways in the region. Through this process, bikeways are selected which are beneficial to both the individual town, as well as surrounding communities.

Presently, a bikeway has been constructed in Fitchburg. Plans have been developed in the towns of Harvard, Groton and Lancaster.

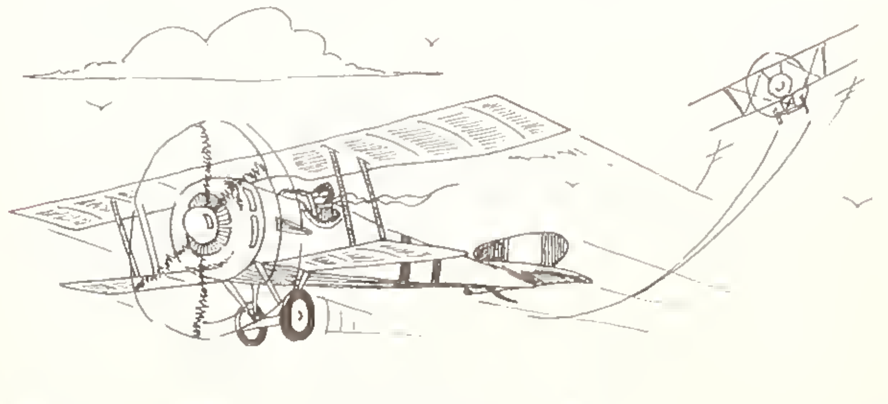


RAILROADS

Rail service for the Montachusett Region is predominantly provided by the Boston & Maine Railroad (B&M) with the Consolidated Rail Corporation (CONRAIL) and the Providence & Worcester Railroad serving a minor role. Presently, only freight service is provided. However, through a contract between the Boston & Maine Railroad and the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA), commuting passenger service is provided between Acton and Boston.

HIGHWAYS

In the Montachusett Region, highways are the most important mode of transportation. Route 2, presently is the only first class highway in the Region, providing fast access for East/West movement. Interstate Route 495 intersects Route 2 adjacent to the Region and provides North South access. This has given the Region added economic development potential by providing good limited access highway connections to major markets throughout New England. Interstate I-190, when constructed, will provide better access for the Region to major markets to the south and west, such as Worcester, Springfield, Hartford, and New York.



AIRPORTS

Air service is provided to the Montachusett Region by five airports. This does not include the military airfield at Fort Devens. The largest airport serving the Region is the Fitchburg-Leominster airport. Although adjacent to an industrial development, the primary use is for business and private flights. The National Guard and a flight instruction school also use this facility. The Gardner airport, located in the adjacent town of Templeton, is a smaller facility than the Fitchburg airport and provides for recreational flying and some business flights. The airstrips at Shirley, Sterling, and Groton are essentially for recreational and personal flights.

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

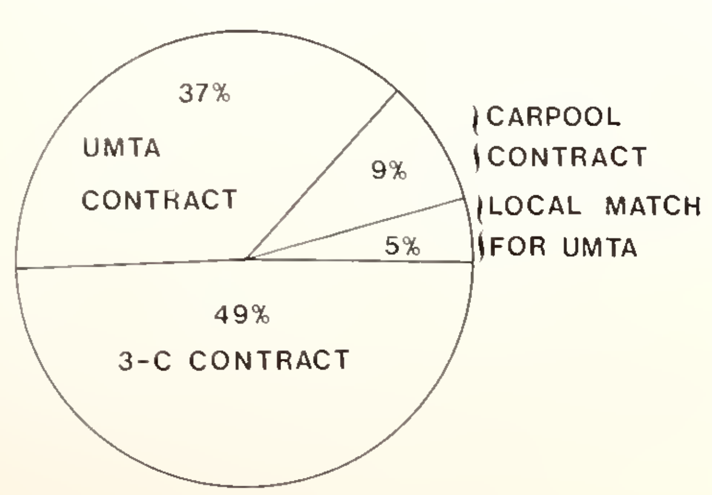
[illegible] Transit Development Program (TDP), completed in 19[illegible], was funded by [illegible] Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) with 20 percent matching funds [illegible] by the MRPC and the cities of Fitchburg and Leominster. The purpose of this study was to inventory existing transit services in the region, determine the need and demand for improvement of [illegible], and [illegible] a set of recommendations as to how these improvements could be accomplished over the short term (5 years).

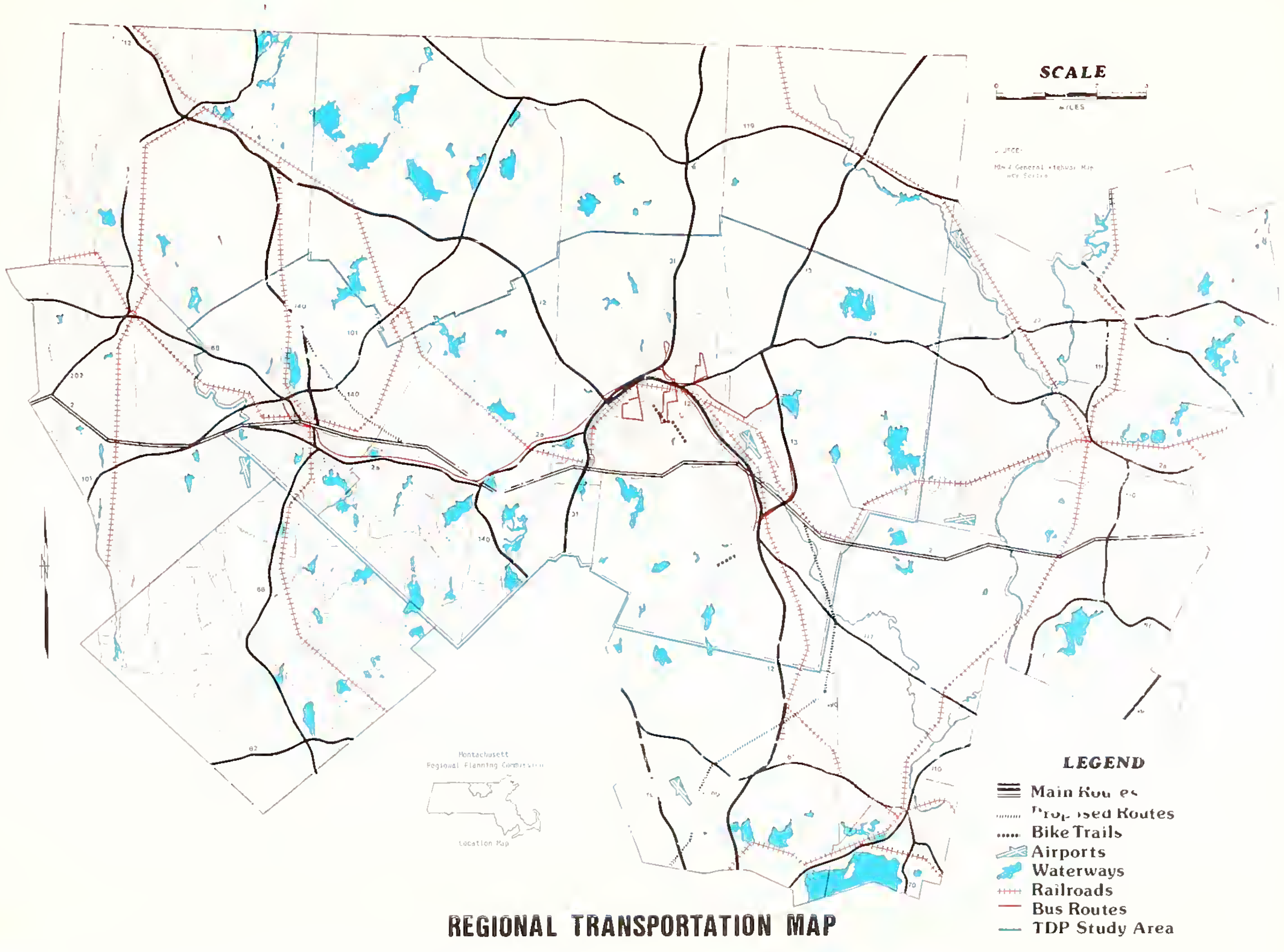
An initial task of the TDP was to conduct an analysis of public transit facilities in the Region, including bus services, taxi service, and special transit services for the elderly and handicapped. Data for this analysis was gathered through an intensive survey effort, including an "on-board" survey of all bus routes in the Montachusett Region. Availability of services, management capability and quality of equipment was examined. A public transit opinion survey to determine the attitudes and needs of present and potential users of transit services was also circulated. This information was used to establish a set of regional goals and objectives for transit. These goals and opportunities were then integrated into the final phase of the TDP to establish and test a set of alternative transit programs best suited to the Region's capabilities and needs.

Throughout this process, the TDP staff was monitored by the MJTC and the Citizen's Advisory Group (CAG). The CAG helped to supply critical feedback and recommendations to the study team. It was comprised of [illegible] individuals representing the MRPC communities, transit companies, the business community, minority groups, the elderly and handicapped, [illegible] members-at-large.

[illegible] consulting firm of Alan M. Voorhees and Associates (AMV) of Boston with the support of the MRPC Staff. AMV [illegible] a series of working papers and discussion memos [illegible] a final report documenting the work and recommendations of the [illegible] program. These reports have been submitted to public officials and transit operators for their reaction. A key aspect of the TDP was an analysis of the pros and cons of establishing a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) in the Montachusett Region. The [illegible] concluded that the formation of an RTA was the only means of guaranteeing the continued availability of public transportation in the Montachusett Region for the future. If, as a result of the TDP analysis, eligible communities decide to form an RTA, they will be enabled to purchase buses and vans at only 10 percent of their face value with the balance funded by state and federal agencies. Whatever the ultimate decision for an RTA, the MRPC has taken the position that transit in the region should remain in the hands of private operators. The RTA would serve only to assist private operators to secure State and Federal funding for capital purchases and operating expenses.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1977–1978





REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION MAP

SPECIAL STUDIES

MJTC conducts special studies on significant transportation priorities for the region. Such priorities in 1976 included the Route 140 Corridor Planning Study and monitoring Route I-190 development through the Town of Sterling.

ROUTE 140 CORRIDOR PLANNING STUDY

The MRPC was given the responsibility of analyzing the impact which the proposed Route 140 would cause on the Town of Westminster and to prepare recommendations to the MDPW concerning road construction. MRPC maintained high public involvement by the Westminster residents in the identification of problem areas, such as, environmental, cost of the proposal, and analyzing the new traffic patterns, possible solutions to those problems, and addressing the concerns of the Westminster citizens to the MDPW and Federal Highway Administration.

MONITORING ROUTE I-190

The MRPC has been designated by the Governor of the Commonwealth as the lead agency for coordination of planning services and technical assistance which the Town of Sterling will need for controlling the new problems which will be caused by Route I-190. The proposed six miles of I-190 will divide the town on a north-south axis. Intensive development pressures in anticipation of the new access is already evident. Consequently, town plans, municipal services, and development control mechanisms are in need of quick and efficient reviewing and updating. The MRPC with the assistance of various state agencies is providing the Town of Sterling with its technical assistance in the form of information concerning land use and transportation systems.

MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT OF THE 3-C PLANNING PROCESS

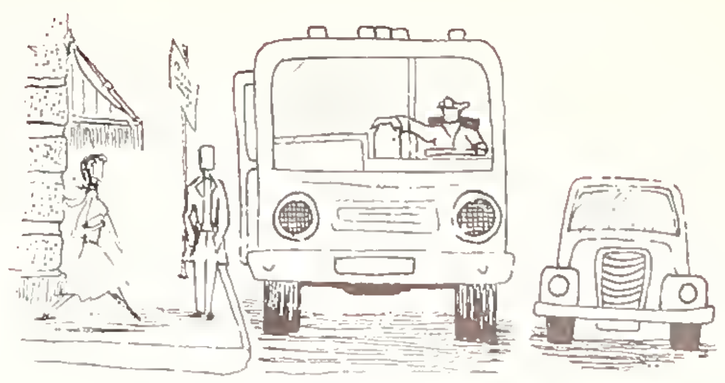
Federal regulations require that each urbanized area, as a condition for the receipt of Federal capital or operating assistance, have a continuing cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process (3-C process) that results in plans and programs consistent with the comprehensively planned development of the area.

In the Montachusett Region, the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, Massachusetts Department of Public Works, and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction have been designated by the Governor as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which has the responsibility for carrying out the 3-C process. A Memorandum of Understanding between these three agencies was executed on March 10, 1976 explaining each role in the 3-C process.

The MPO is guided by the citizen advisory committee known as the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC). The MJTC is composed of:

a) One representative of each MRPC city and town (including Harvard) as nominated by the Mayor or Board of Selectmen.
b) One representative of each MRPC city and town (including Harvard) as appointed by the Planning Board.
c) Ex-officio representatives of the MRPC, DPW, and EOTC
d) Other representatives of various public and private institutions as accepted by MJTC.

The MJTC acts as a liaison between Montachusett residents and the MPO. The MRPC staff performs the technical work activities described in the Unified Work Program and provides technical assistance to local communities. The MRPC staff provides transportation study information, establishes transportation planning priorities, performs duties of a regional clearinghouse for proposed projects, and serves as a public information center for transportation issues. Thus, transportation development decisions are based not only on state and local policies but on increased technical information and increased citizen input.



MONTACHUSETT CARPOOL - BUSPOOL PROGRAM

[illegible] the Montachusett Regional [illegible] Carpool-Buspool program. [illegible] names [illegible] carpool [illegible] they work. In addition, [illegible] data to the MRPC [illegible].

The advantages of carpooling are many. [illegible] Carpooling can enable the commuter [illegible] even more. In addition, carpooling [illegible] protects the environment, and [illegible] able to other members of the family car.

Although MRPC will [illegible] all materials and [illegible] should a demand arise at a later time.

NOTICE

The Montachusett [illegible] month at [illegible]. MJTC members, by community, are as follows: [illegible] Zilkowski; [illegible] MacDonald; [illegible] Fitchburg, [illegible] Nicholas Pudasi[illegible]; [illegible] Mary Jane Gregg; Hubbardston; [illegible] Shepardson, Jr.; Leominster, [illegible]; Lunenburg, Einard Warpula, Robert El[illegible]; [illegible] Sterling, Peter Tosi, Dorothy [illegible]; [illegible]send, Dennis Jashner; Westminster, Karl [illegible]; Winchendon, Robert Ganley.

Ex officio members are: MRPC, [illegible]; MDPW [illegible] Fitzgerald; EOTC, BTP&D, FHA, Paul [illegible].

Organizational members are: Amalgamated Transit [illegible], J. Raimon; Fitchburg, Department of Elder Affairs, [illegible]; Greater Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce, Fred [illegible]; Greater Gardner Chamber of Commerce, Herbert Neunherz; Leominster League of Women Voters, Charlene Rocheleau; Nashua River Watershed Association, and Fitchburg League of Women Voters, Joyce Huff; Council on Aging, Bedford Kaddy; Montachusett Opportunity Council, Edwin Lepler; Northern Worcester County Board of Realtors, Walter Woodruff; Retired Men's Club of the Montachusett Region, Alexander Svelis.

MRPC Staff: Mohammed Khan, Director; Planners: Joseph Distefano, George Jepson, David Weir, Richard Santner, Kwang Chan, Susan Haber, Samuel Lawton, Elizabeth McDonald, Michael Sylvia, Steve Graham; Support Staff: Laila Michaud, Lorna Fredd, Patricia Donaghy, Robert Cook, Ruth Twomley, Donna Hills, Bonnie Williams, Pauline Hilow. CETA Staff: Nadia Beiser, Vita Capurso, Guy Helander, Kathleen Kelley, Francis Trevisani, Nathan Smith, Pamela Wilson, Peggy Renaud, Lorie Bernhardt, Bob Blanchflower, Kathy Livingston.

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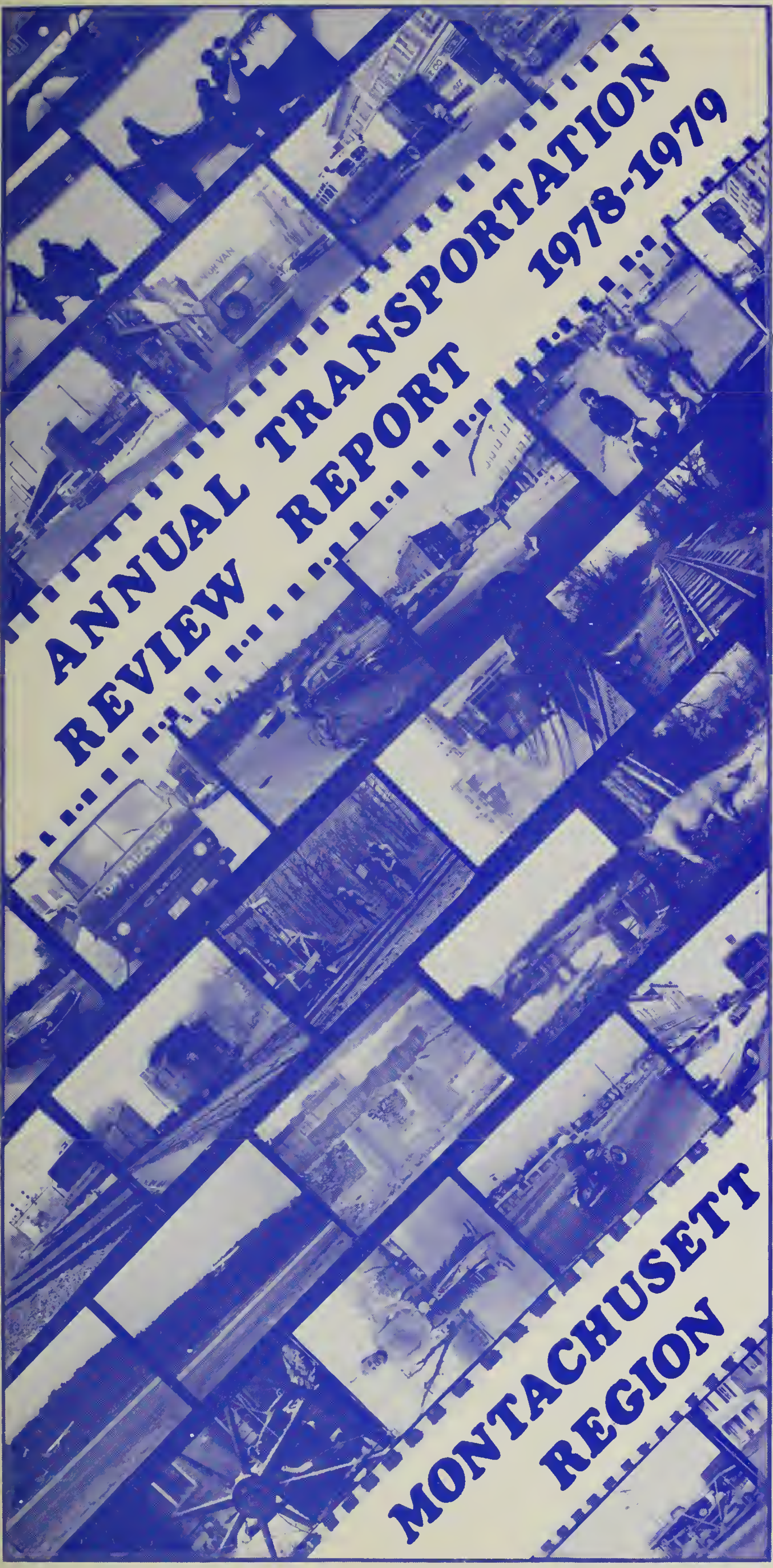


ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION REVIEW REPORT 1978-1979

MONTACHUSETT REGION

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

150 MAIN STREET
FITCHBURG, MASS. 01420

Prepared by

The Montachusett Regional Planning
Commission Staff

for

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

Department of Public Works

Executive Office of Transportation
and Construction

Under the supervision and direction of
Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee

The preparation of this report was financed under Contract #19437 with the Massachusetts Department of Public Works in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration.

Transportation Planning in the Montachusett Region

The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) is a transportation policy advisory group for the Montachusett Region which provides a forum for an ongoing transportation planning process for the 17 communities, which are members of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), plus Harvard, which is a member of the MJTC.

The MRPC maintains a consistent analysis of existing travel conditions, transportation facilities, and management of all transportation systems. The MRPC is responsible for comprehensive planning, including transportation planning, as defined in Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws. The MJTC evaluates alternative transportation system improvements to promulgate efficiency of existing transportation resources. The MRPC promotes transportation planning that is consistent with and integrated into the region's comprehensive long range land use, urban development, environmental protection policy and energy conservation goals. The MRPC also monitors and forecasts the region's economic, social, and land use activities in accord with potential transportation demands.

INTRODUCTION

The 3-C Planning Process: Management and Support

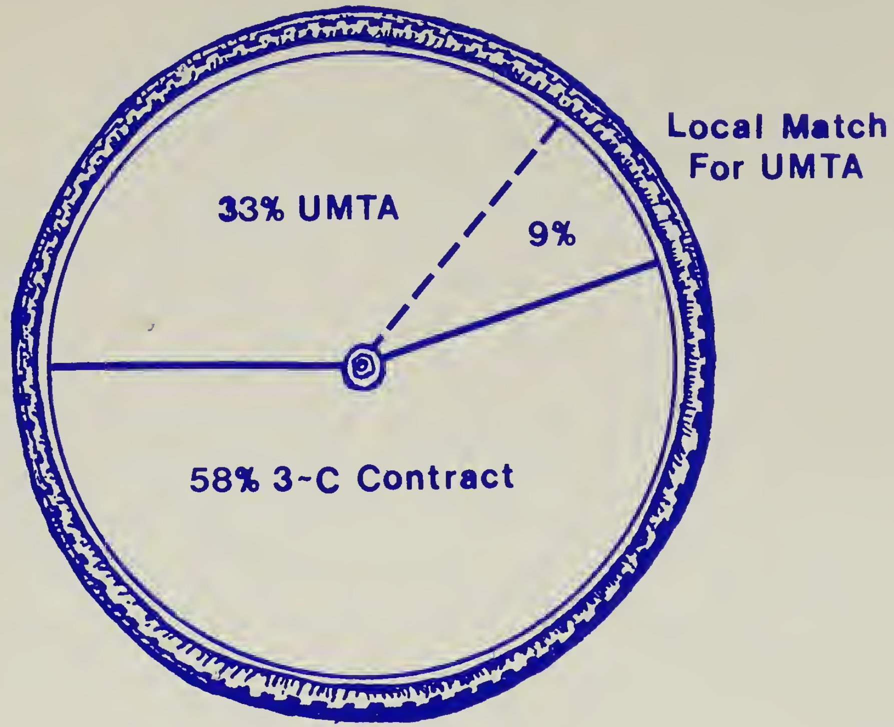
In urbanized areas, approval of federally aided transportation projects is contingent on their being based on a federally certified 3C (Cooperative, Comprehensive, and Continuing) transportation process. 3C transportation plans in the Montachusett Region must be Cooperative, responding to local and regional needs, as well as federal and state policies; Comprehensive, considering all modes of transportation, consistent with regional growth and development plans, and linking transportation programs with land use, economic, social and environmental concerns; and Continuing with the quality of being dynamic and able to be revised to meet changing needs as public attitudes, socio-economic or environmental conditions change.

In the Montachusett Region, the MRPC, MRTA, Massachusetts Department of Public Works, (DPW) and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction have been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which has the responsibility for carrying out the 3C process. The MPO is guided by the citizen advisory committee, known as the MJTC. The MJTC consists of:

a. One representative of each MRPC city or town (including Harvard) as nominated by the Mayor or Board of Selectmen.
b. One representative of each city and town as appointed by the Planning Board.
c. Exofficio representatives of the MRPC, MRTA, DPW, and EOTC.
d. Other representatives of various public and private institutions as accepted by MJTC.

The MJTC acts as a liaison between Montachusett residents and the MPO. The MRPC staff performs the technical work activities described in the Unified Work Program and provides technical assistance to local communities. MRPC provides transportation study information, establishes transportation planning priorities, acts as a regional clearinghouse for proposed projects, and serves as a public information center for proposed issues. Thus, transportation development decisions are based not only on state and local policies, but on increased technical information and increased citizen input.

Financial Statement



State Contracts		
3-C	$80,000	58%
Federal Contracts		
UMTA*	46,000	33%
Local UMTA Match	11,500	9%
TOTAL	$137,500	100%

*Urban Mass. Transportation Administration grants require a 20% local funding match

Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) consists of an annual list of proposed regional transportation improvements. These proposals are recommended for development by the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee and by the local communities, and are arranged according to the overall regional priority for each improvement. Some are in the formal 10 year projections of multi-modal transportation improvements, others are projects proposed for federal and state assistance for the first program year.

Projects are developed and implemented through the following phases: Corridor Planning Studies (CPS) where applicable, Preliminary Engineering Phase (PE), Right-of-Way (ROW), and Construction.

Transportation Improvement Program 1979 Priorities

The Fiscal Year 1979 TIP lists the following overall regional priorities:

1A. I-190
1. Route 2 Improvements, Fitchburg-Leominster
2. Route 140 Bypass Construction, Gardner-Westminster
3. Route 2/13 Interchange Improvement - Leominster
4. Route 101 Improvement - Templeton
5. Fitchburg Connector
6. Clinton Connector
7. Ayer Road, Route 110/111 Improvement, Harvard
8. Route 31 Reconstruction, Ashby
9. Matthews Street Improvement, Gardner
10. Laurel Street, Kimball Street, and Putnam Street Reconstruction, Fitchburg
11. Groton-Shirley Road Improvements, Ayer
12. Route 68 Resurfacing, Hubbardston
13. Barre Road Reconstruction, Templeton
14. Betty Spring Road and Bridge Improvements, Gardner
15. Fisher Road Reconstruction, Fitchburg
16. Ashburnham Hill Road, Scott Road, Rindge Road Reconstruction, Fitchburg
17. Industrial Road, Crawford Street Connector Construction, Leominster-Fitchburg
18. Harvard Street Reconstruction, Leominster
19. Route 2A Improvements, Lunenburg
20. Route 119 Improvements, Ashby

CONSTRUCTION ON I-190

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Monitoring Route I-190

The construction of Route I-190 will bring new environmental problems to the Town of Sterling. The proposed six miles of the highway will divide the town on a north-south axis and pressures to develop the area in anticipation of the new access are already evident. Consequently, town plans, municipal services, and methods of controlling development are in need of quick and efficient review and updating.

The MRPC has been designated by the Governor of the Commonwealth as the chief agency responsible for the coordination of planning services and technical assistance that Sterling will need to deal with these environmental problems. With various other state agencies, the MRPC is providing the town with information concerning land use, water quality and transportation systems.

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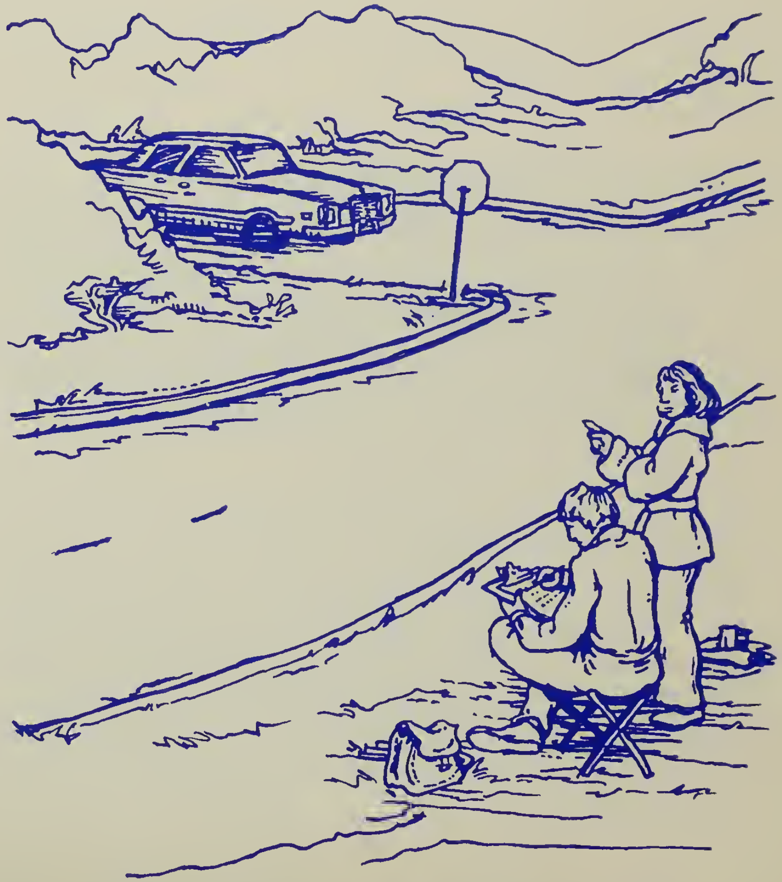
Transportation Plan

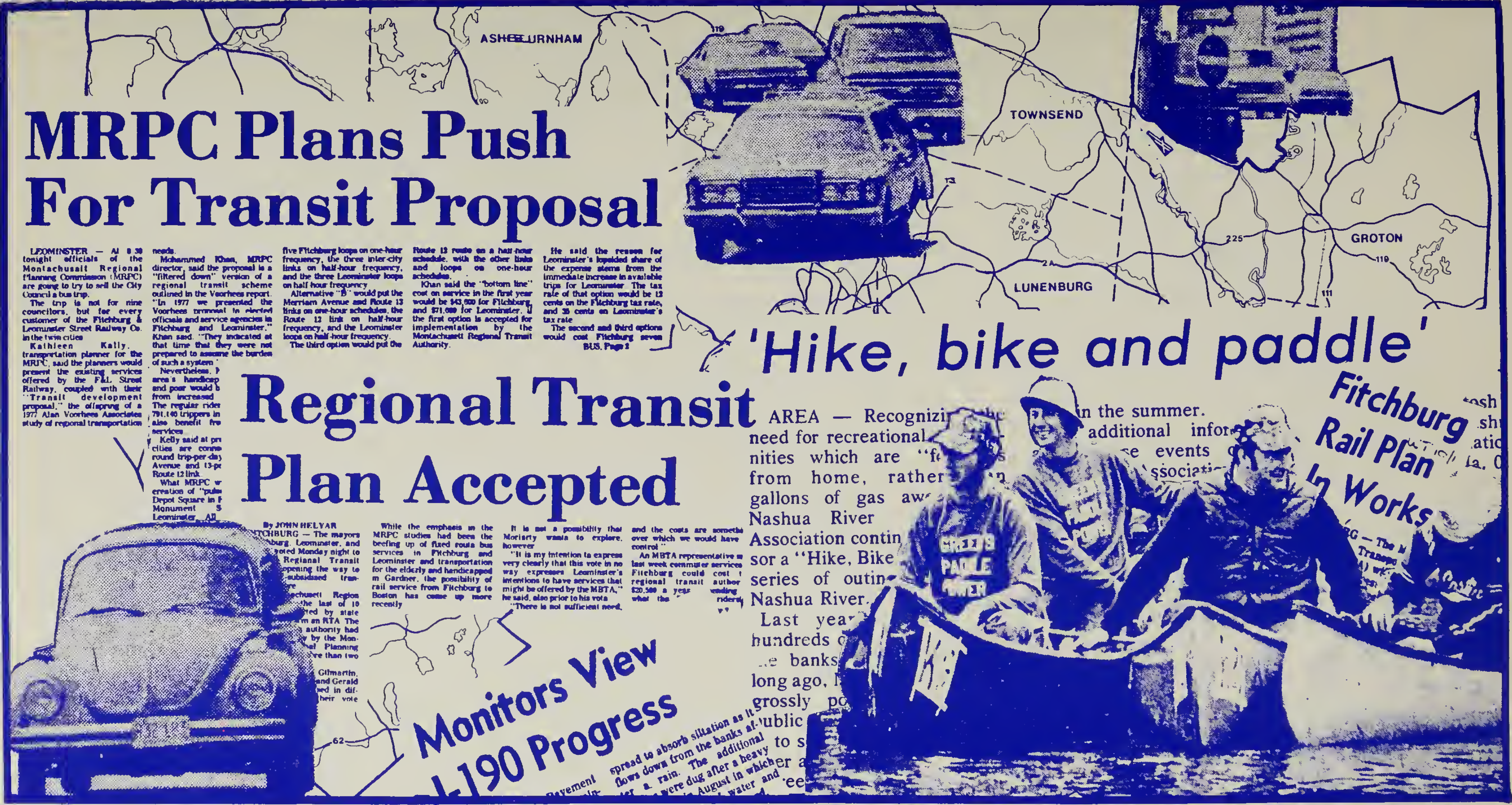
In January of 1979, the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission submitted to the Department of Public Works a draft Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to serve as a decision making tool for local, regional, and state officials, as well as for citizens by developing short and long range transportation improvements. To meet this end, the Plan comprises two major elements: A Transportation System Management Element and a Long Range Element.

The Transportation System Management Element is designed to meet the short range transportation needs. Improving management of existing facilities through proper integration of traffic operations such as channelization of traffic flow, safety improvements, and coordination of all forms of traffic systems increases traffic efficiency. The Long Range Element defines future transportation needs in the region as well as new transportation policies, proposed new facilities and major changes in existing facilities.

The Transportation Plan specifically addresses the following areas:
a. Existing Growth Potentials for the Region and the Communities
b. Regional Transportation Goals and Objectives
c. Regional and Community Transportation Issues and Problems
d. Inventory of Existing Data and Future Data Projections including Street and Highway System, Transit, Rail, Airports, and Bikeways
e. Alternative Selections and Recommendations
f. Project and Program Implementation Schedule



Traffic count field work is an important means of transportation data gathering.


ASHBURNHAM
TOWNSEND
GROTON
LUNENBURG
119
225
2A
13
111
62

MRPC Plans Push For Transit Proposal

LEOMINSTER — At 8:30 tonight officials of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) are going to try to sell the City Council a bus trip.

The trip is not for nine councilors, but for every customer of the Fitchburg & Leominster Street Railway Co. in the twin cities

Kathleen Kelly, transportation planner for the MRPC, said the planners would present the existing services offered by the F&L Street Railway, coupled with their "Transit development proposal," the offspring of a 1977 Alan Voorhees Associates study of regional transportation needs.

Mohammed Khan, MRPC director, said the proposal is a "filtered down" version of a regional transit scheme outlined in the Voorhees report. "In 1977 we presented the Voorhees proposal to elected officials and service agencies in Fitchburg and Leominster," Khan said. "They indicated at that time that they were not prepared to assume the burden of such a system."

Nevertheless,
area's handicap
and poor would b
from increased
The regular rider
791,140 trippers in
also benefit fro
services

Kelly said at pre
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Avenue and 13-pe
Route 12 link.

What MRPC w
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Leominster. All

five Fitchburg loops on one-hour frequency, the three inter-city links on half-hour frequency, and the three Leominster loops on half hour frequency

Alternative "B" would put the Merriam Avenue and Route 13 links on one-hour schedules, the Route 12 link on half-hour frequency, and the Leominster loops on half-hour frequency.

The third option would put the Route 12 route on a half-hour schedule, with the other links and loops on one-hour schedules.

Khan said the "bottom line" cost on service in the first year would be $43,000 for Fitchburg, and $71,000 for Leominster, if the first option is accepted for implementation by the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority.

He said the reason for Leominster's lopsided share of the expense stems from the immediate increase in available trips for Leominster. The tax rate of that option would be 12 cents on the Fitchburg tax rate, and 35 cents on Leominster's tax rate

The second and third options would cost Fitchburg seven

BUS, Page 2

Regional Transit Plan Accepted

By JOHN HELYAR

TCHBURG — The mayors
hburg, Leominster, and
voted Monday night to
Regional Transit
opening the way to
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authority had
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Gilmartin,
and Gerald
ed in dif-
heir vote

While the emphasis in the MRPC studies had been the beefing up of fixed route bus services in Fitchburg and Leominster and transportation for the elderly and handicapped in Gardner, the possibility of rail service from Fitchburg to Boston has come up more recently

It is not a possibility that Moriarty wants to explore, however

"It is my intention to express very clearly that this vote in no way expresses Leominster's intentions to have services that might be offered by the MBTA," he said, also prior to his vote

"There is not sufficient need,

and the costs are somethi
over which we would have
control."

An MBTA representative s
last week commuter services
Fitchburg could cost
regional transit author
$20,500 a year
what the
riders
"

'Hike, bike and paddle'

AREA — Recognizi
need for recreational
nities which are "f
from home, rather
gallons of gas aw
Nashua River
Association contin
sor a "Hike, Bike
series of outin
Nashua River.

Last year
hundreds o
the banks
long ago,
grossly po
public
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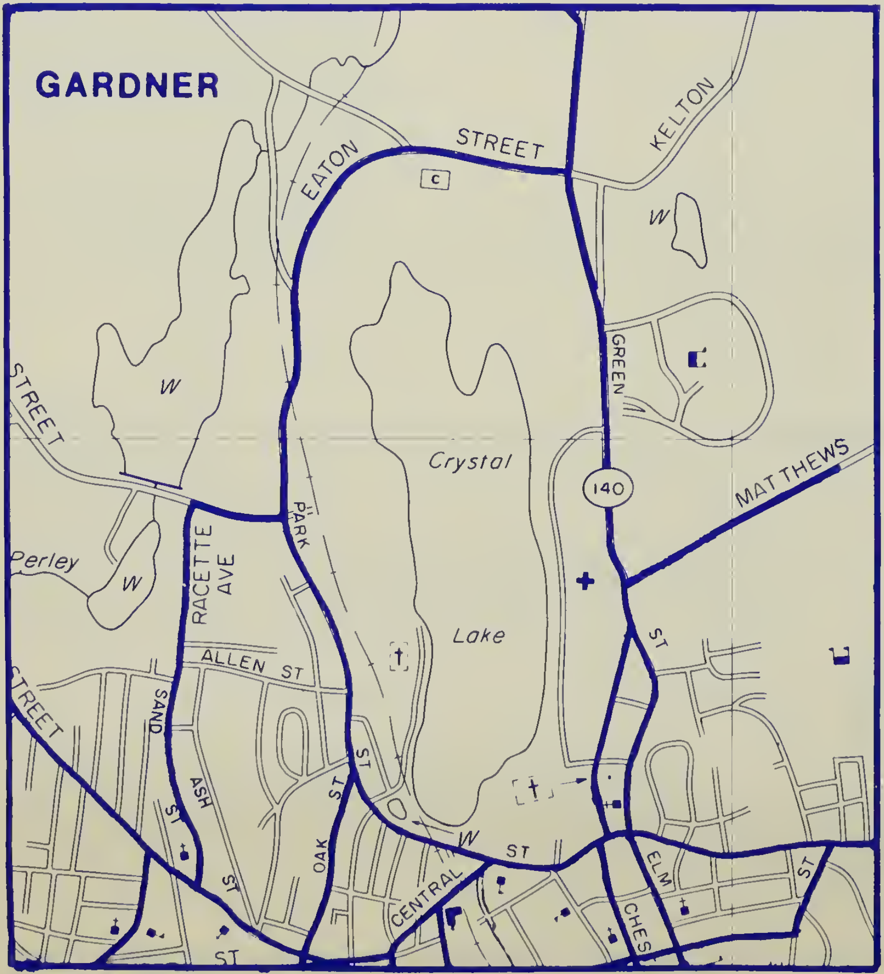
in the summer.
additional infor
se events
Associati

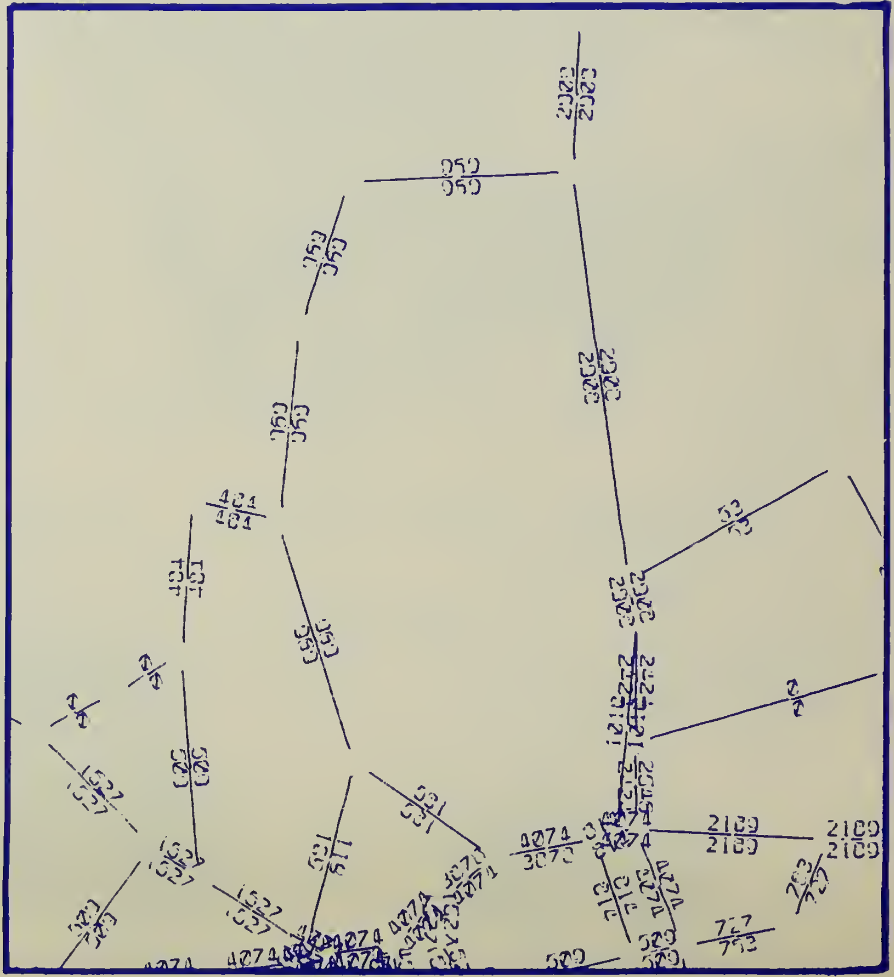
Fitchburg Rail Plan In Works

Monitors View I-190 Progress

spread to absorb siltation as it flows down from the banks after a rain. The additional were dug after a heavy August in which water and

Systems Planning





SYSTEMS PLANNING

Section of conventional DPW highway map
1"=2000' (Computer-used roads in BOLDFACE)

The predominant mode of transportation in the Montachusett Region is the private automobile. The region is crossed east to west by Route 2, currently the highest type of facility available. Immediately to the east, Interstate 495 provides fair north/south access. The completion of I-190 and the Route 140 interchanges will provide additional access to the north, south and west.

As a result of the region's overall dependence on this system for transport, highways play a dominant role in determining areawide socio-economic growth potentials. Therefore, the planning analysis must reflect the relationship between these growth potentials and future highway system changes. In order to intergrate all of these factors, a computer is an appropriate tool.

Section of computerized Traffic Volume map
(same area of Gardner, same scale)

Over the past year in continued cooperation with the Bureau of Transportation Planning and Development in Boston, the MRPC staff has been building a computer model of the regional highway traffic system. This model is near completion and will simulate the actual vehicle movements today and for the forecast years 1985 and 2005. In addition to identifying Long Range Problems, it will also serve as a valuable tool in testing corridor study alternatives, TIP improvements and site specific land use impacts.

Once operational, the model will also provide information on air pollution, user cost and energy consumption.

DOCU
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8 1984
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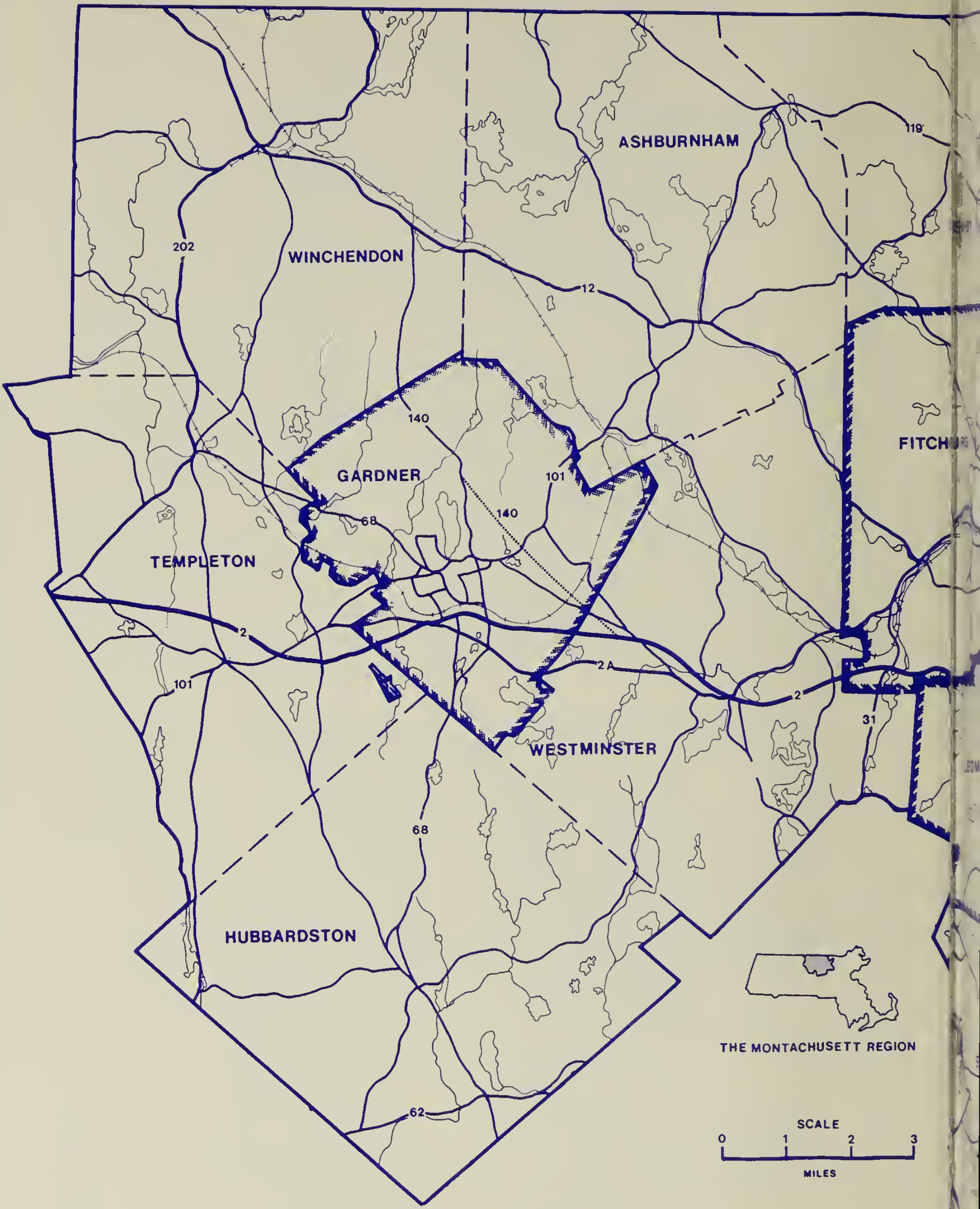
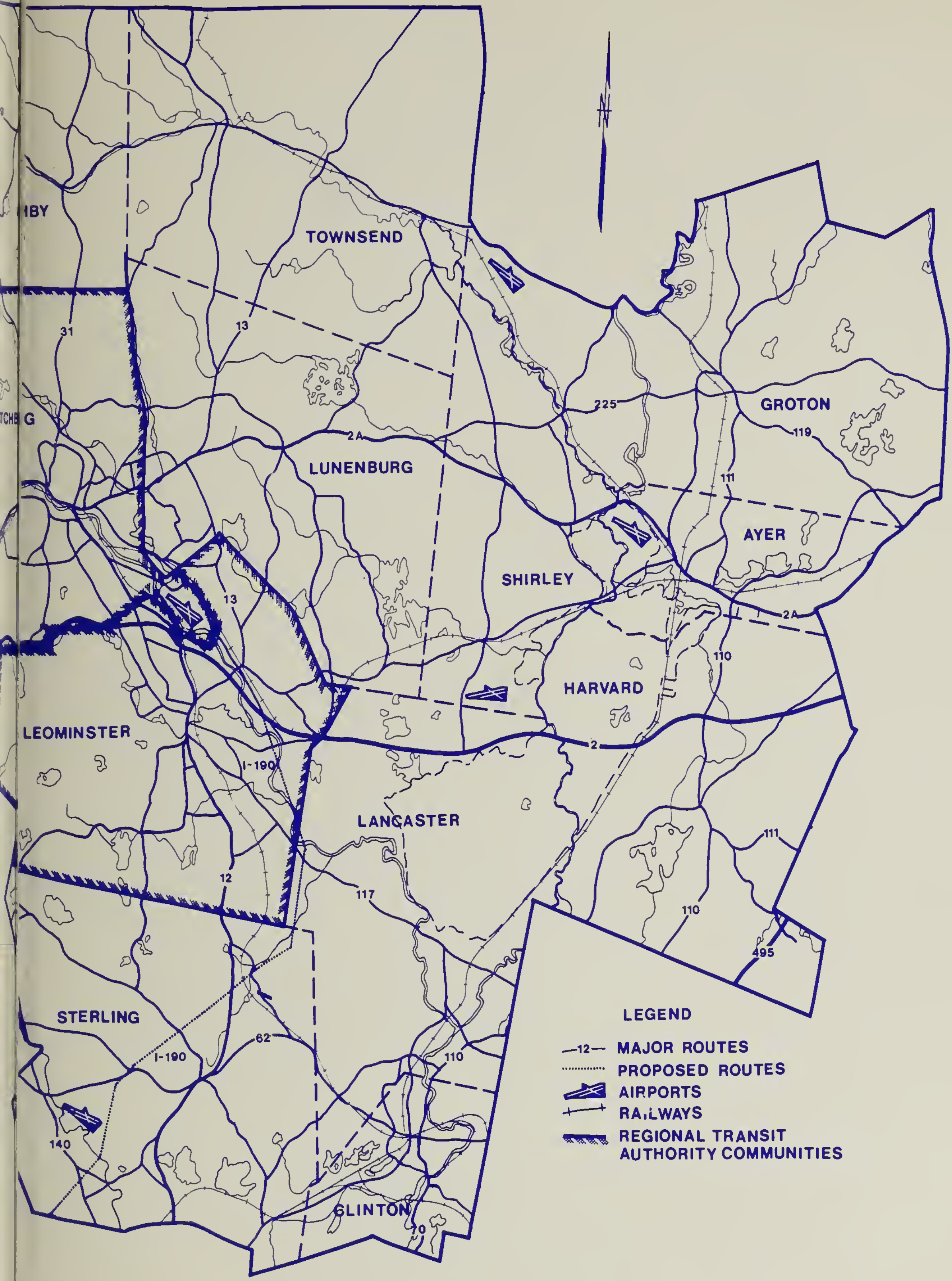


REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION MAP


N
HBY
TOWNSEND
31
13
TCH G
LUNENBURG
2A
225
GROTON
119
111
AYER
SHIRLEY
13
HARVARD
110
2A
LEOMINSTER
I-190
2
LANCASTER
117
12
111
110
495
STERLING
62
I-190
110
140
CLINTON
70
LEGEND
—12— MAJOR ROUTES
PROPOSED ROUTES
AIRPORTS
RAILWAYS
REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY COMMUNITIES

Bikeways

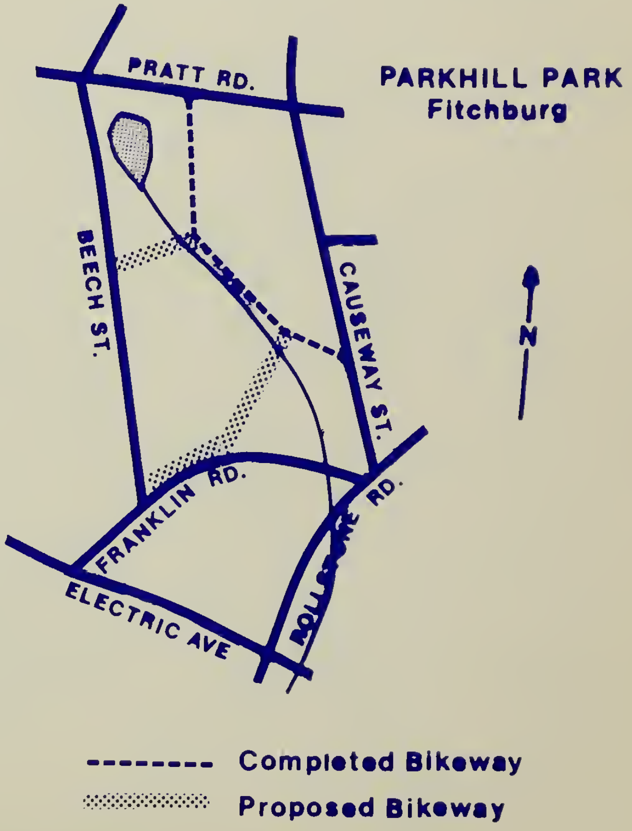
"Bikeway" is a general term which can refer to several different types of bicycle facilities. It is a public right-of-way, owned by the people and maintained by a responsible state or local agency just as streets are owned and maintained. There are three kinds of bikeways:

Bikepath - Bikepaths are completely separated from the main roadway. Most are paved, and are reserved exclusively for the use of bicycles and pedestrians.

Bikelane - Bikelanes are a part of the pavement marked off for the use of bicycles either by a painted line, curb, or raised pavement. These may be created on existing roads.

Bikeroute - Bikeroutes are roads where signs have been posted to warn motorists of bicycle traffic. There are no pavement markings.

Presently, one segment of a Bikepath Plan has been completed in Fitchburg and there are plans to extend it to a Bikeroute. In Leominster and Harvard respectively a Bikelane and Bikepath along with four Bikeroutes are planned. In Groton a Bikeway is in the planning stage.

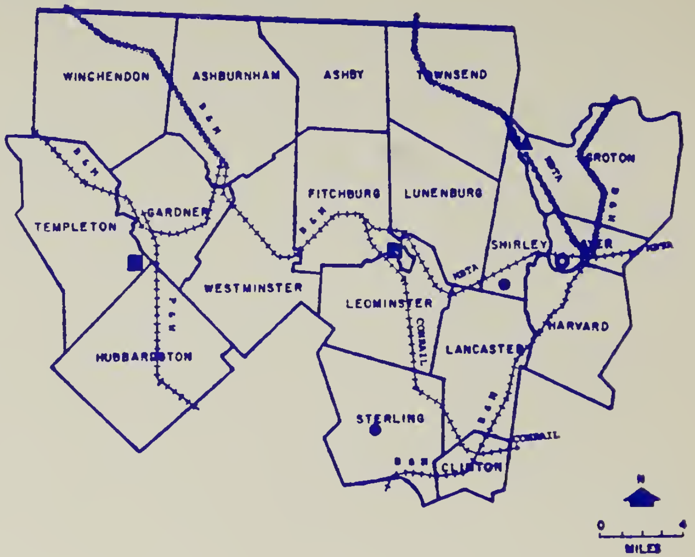


Airports and Railroads

Service is provided to the Region by six general aviation airports. Two (Fitchburg and Gardner) are municipal airports, and three (Shirley, Sterling, and Groton) are private operations. The Fort Devens Moore Army Airfield operates primarily as a military airfield. The Fitchburg Airport, the largest in the Region, is used for business and private flights, by the National Guard and by a flight instruction school. The smaller airports provide for recreational, personal, and some business flying. The Fitchburg, Gardner and Moore Army Airfields, as part of the national Airport System, are eligible for development projects funding under the Airport Development Aid Program. The Fitchburg Airport Commissioners are currently seeking funds under this program for the development of an Airport Master Plan.

Rail transport in the Montachusett Region is limited to the movement of freight. Extensive freight service is maintained on the Boston and Maine (B&M) lines. The Consolidated Rail Corporation (CONRAIL) and the Providence and Worcester Railroad also operate in the Region. As the regional demand for freight service increases, the need to upgrade the existing rail facilities, to retain some of those proposed for abandonment, and to improve the overall operation and scope of the rail system is becoming evident. In recognition of the increasing viability of rail transportation, the New England Regional Commission (NERCOM) has begun to provide funds to rehabilitate the rail system.

MONTACHUSETT REGION



LEGEND

■	Municipal Airport
●	Private Paved Strip
▲	Private Unpaved Strip
✪	Military Airport
++++	Railway Network
▬	Possible Rail Abandonment
B&M	Boston & Maine
CONRAIL	Consolidated Rail
MBTA	Mass. Bay Transit Authority
P&W	Providence & Worcester

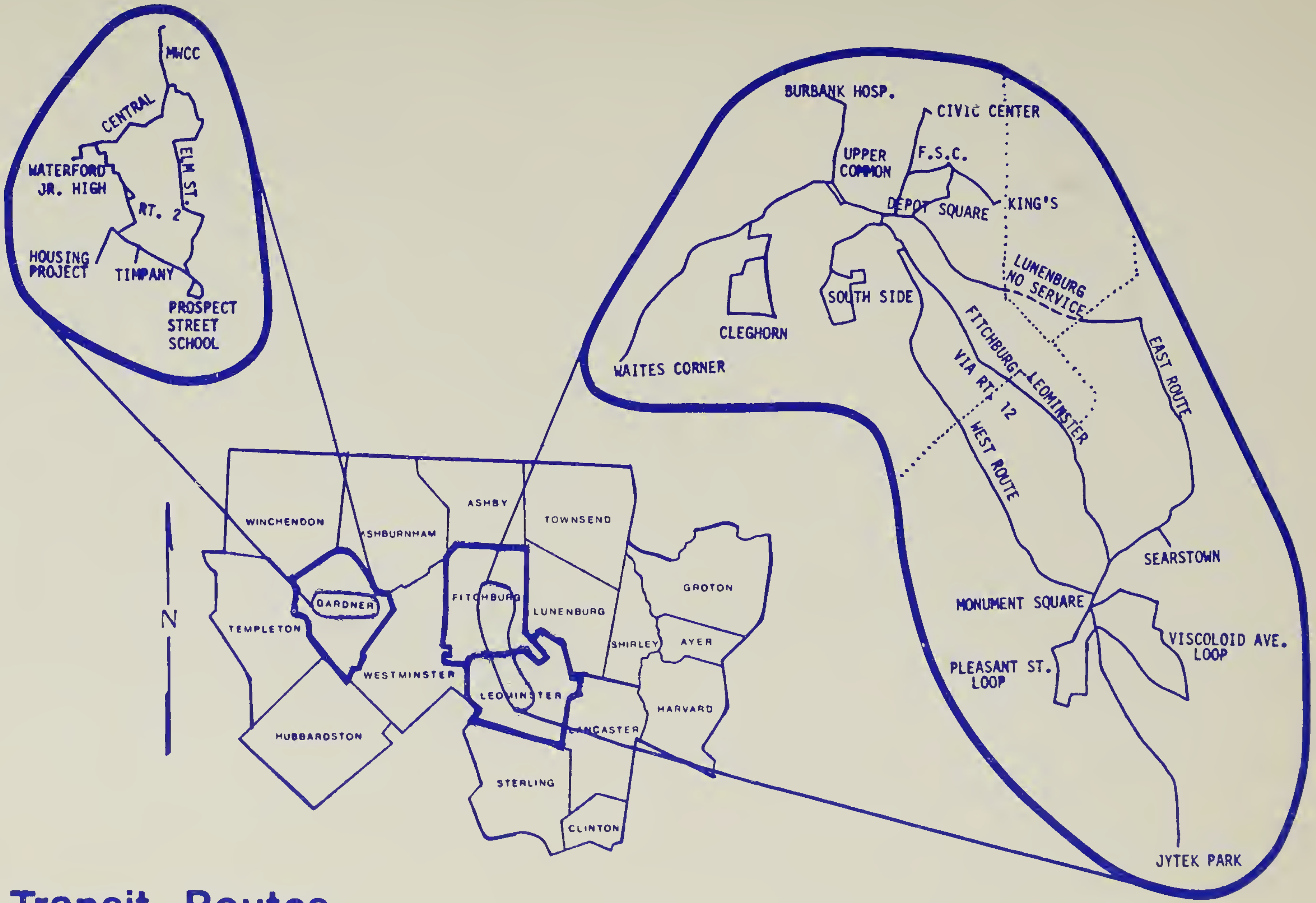
BIKEWAYS, AIR and RAIL SERVICE

Transit Development Program

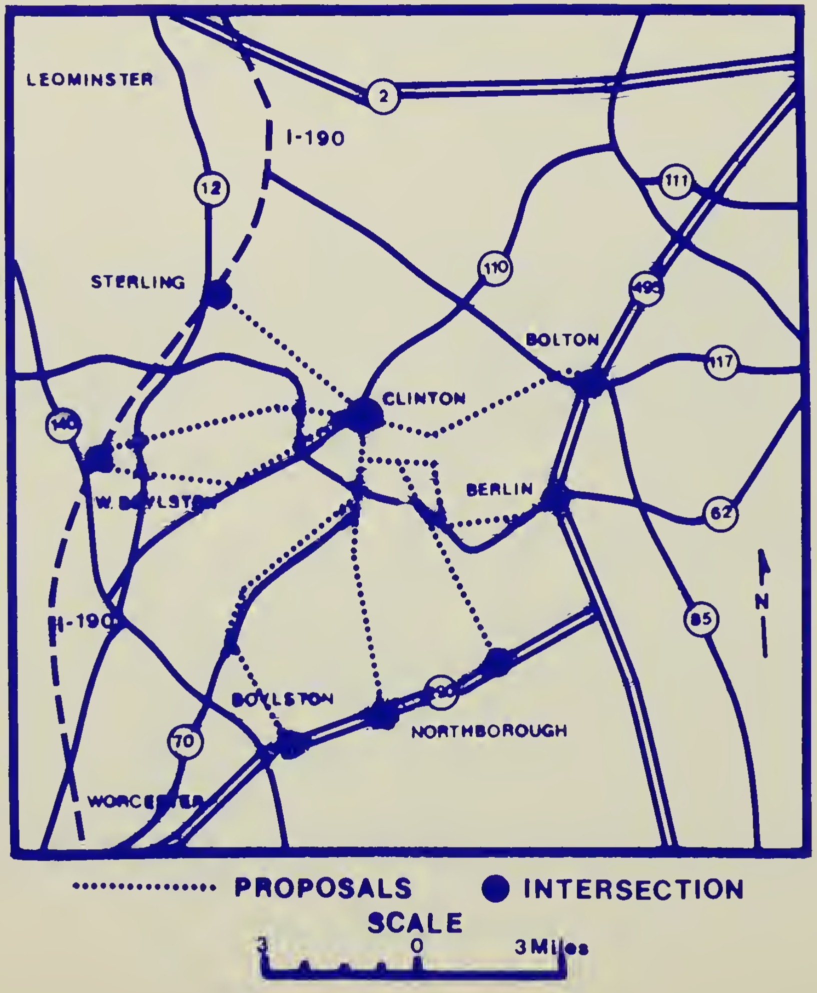
An update of the TDP was prepared during the past year. It addressed the need for additonal transit service in the region, specifically in the city of Gardner and the Montachusett East and Montachusett West areas. Also, particular attention was devoted towards satisfying the unmet travel demands of elderly and handicapped residents.

On August 7, 1978 a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) was formed in the Montachusett Region by the cities of Fitchburg, Leominster, and Gardner. Since that time, the MRPC has developed proposed transit routings and detailed cost estimates for the Fitchburg/Leominster area and for Gardner. These proposed services were presented to respective mayors and city councils and finally to the RTA at the December 1978 meeting. As of yet, no action has been taken on public transit by the RTA, however, the MRPC is continually providing technical assistance to the member communities on that issue.

Currently no direct rail passenger service is provided in the region. MBTA (Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority) trains out of Boston travel only as far west as Acton. With much of the employment patterns for the Eastern third of the region, especially directed toward Boston, efforts are being made to reinstate local service. In the fall of 1978 the MBTA submitted a proposal for commuter rail service to the MRTA (Montachusett Regional Transit Authority). The plan included a combination of train and feeder bus service from Gardner to Boston. Round trip service was proposed -- five times daily from Gardner and ten times daily from both Fitchburg and Leominster. At their December meeting, the MRPA decided to table the commuter rail proposal until a later date.



Proposed Transit Routes



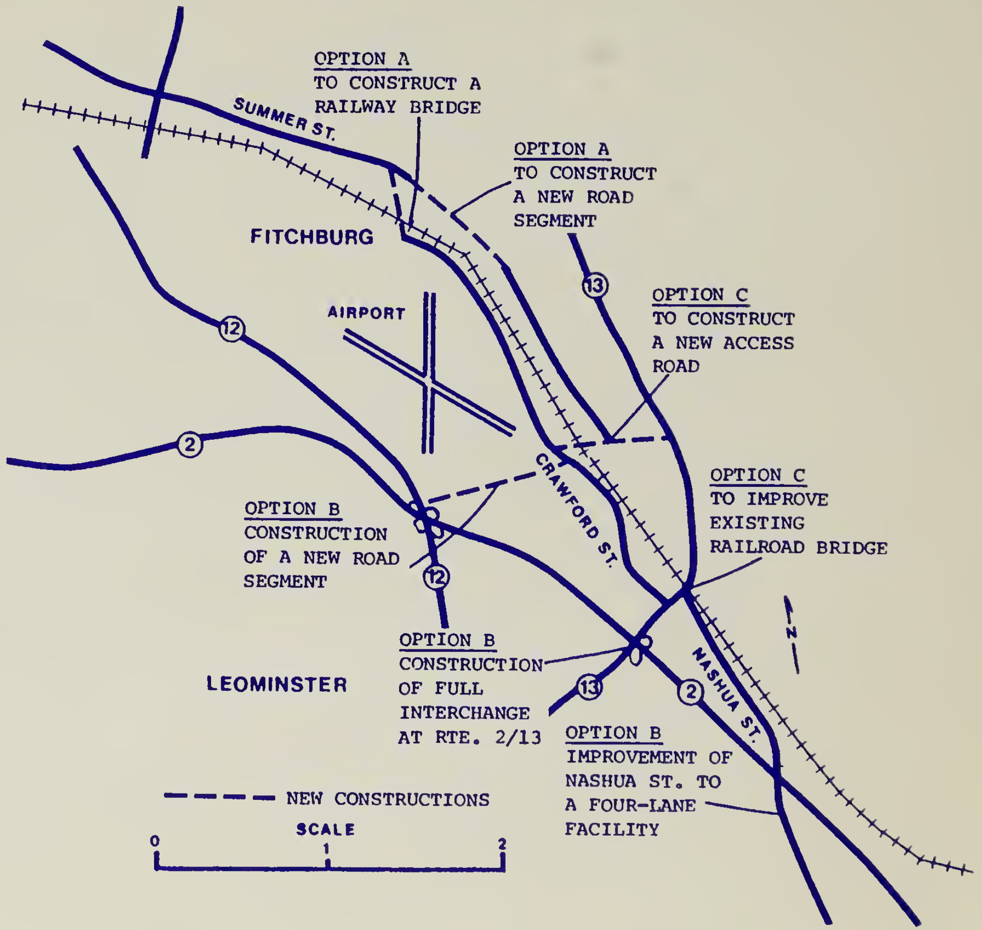
Clinton Early Output Study

The Town of Clinton, through its residents, officials, and local industries, requested a Corrider Planning Study to help alleviate the economic depression it has experienced due, in part, to the lack of any expressway facilities directly accessible to the town. The MRPC conducted a Needs Assessment Study to determine the alternatives for a feasible solution in step with revitalization efforts presently underway in the Town of Clinton. As a result, the Clinton Early Output Study produced a number of proposals for a connector which are demonstrated in the above map. The recommendations center on the connections between Clinton and Route I-190 to accommodate commuters and between Clinton and I-495 to improve access for commercial vehicles. Final recommendations will become an element of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Fitchburg and Leominster Early Output Study

The cities of Fitchburg and Leominster have requested the DPW to conduct a Corridor Planning Study for the area. In turn, the MRPC was asked to develop an Early Output as part of the ongoing Regional Transportation Plan to study Fitchburg's access problem.

The study determined that prior to the construction of a new corridor the immediate need to be addressed is the congestion at the interchange of Route 2 and 13. Secondly, the study recommends the implementation of spot improvements along existing rights-of-way be undertaken to form the corridor. Long term solutions were also developed for future implentation. Final recommendations will become an element of the Regional Transportation Plan.


OPTION A
TO CONSTRUCT A RAILWAY BRIDGE
SUMMER ST.
OPTION A
TO CONSTRUCT A NEW ROAD SEGMENT
FITCHBURG
13
OPTION C
TO CONSTRUCT A NEW ACCESS ROAD
AIRPORT
12
2
CRAWFORD ST.
OPTION C
TO IMPROVE EXISTING RAILROAD BRIDGE
OPTION B
CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ROAD SEGMENT
12
N
OPTION B
CONSTRUCTION OF FULL INTERCHANGE AT RTE. 2/13
LEOMINSTER
13
2
NASHUA ST.
OPTION B
IMPROVEMENT OF NASHUA ST. TO A FOUR-LANE FACILITY
NEW CONSTRUCTIONS
SCALE
0
1
2

Energy

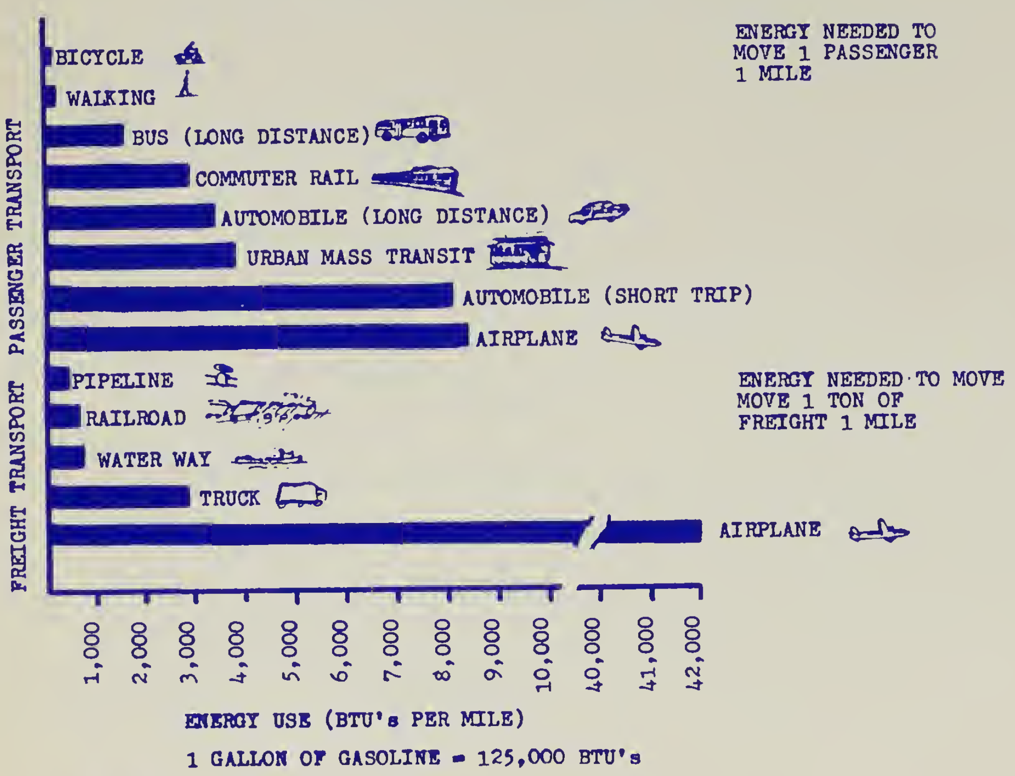
US may ban gasol
sales on weekends
pledge 5%
oil use cut
Ashland
at above OPEC
Iran's Shutoff of Oil
Boosts Plastics Prices
Gasoline
hike of 10c
predicted
tch-22 on fuel
N.J. recluse freezes to death
Arabia, as Biggest Exporter, Holds Line for Now—Carter Energy Curbs Delayed
Energy story: A pileup of problems
Energy-hungry New England
U.S. FEARS SPREADING IMPACT
A world of difference over the price of oil
Jet fuel shortage
14.12
Emergency plan for gas rationing
RISE OF 9.35%
$1 'Gas' Coming
Tough choices on rationing
Oil purchase up trade defici
KUWAIT ESCALATES OIL PRICE INCREASES
High price
of gasoline

Transportation is the single largest consumer of energy in the United States, accounting for nearly one-fourth of the total energy use. In its most fundamental sense, an energy crisis becomes a transportation crisis   For example, transportation improvements that reduce or eliminate congestion not only speeds travel and reduces driver frustrations, it saves energy. An automobile or truck burns nearly twice as much fuel in stop and go traffic as it does on the open road.

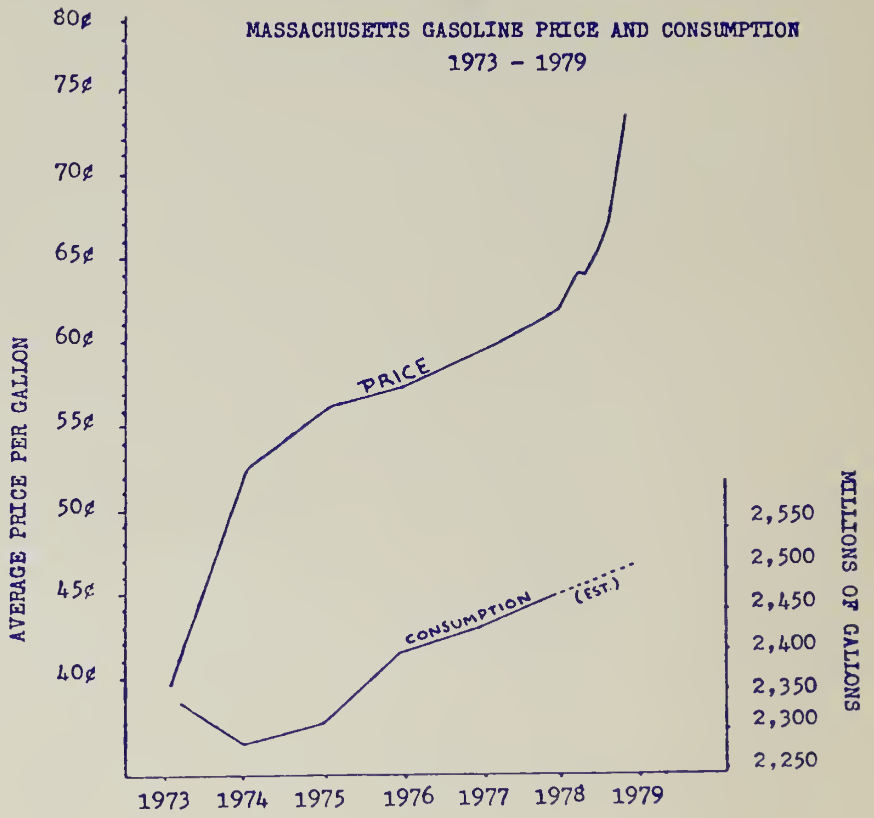
The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission is experiencing a growing sense of awareness and concern about the nation's, New England's, and the region's worsening energy situation. We are attempting to address part of this problem with a regional transit program. Also, energy efficiency is becoming an increasingly important consideration when planning highway improvements, modifications, or construction.

The Montacnusett Regional Planning Commission has initiated an "Energy Use and Resource Survey" that will establish regional historic base line energy data and will document current energy use patterns and trends. In addition to this survey the Commission has established an Energy Advisory Committee to assist the Commission in planning and developing energy programs and services for the area.

RELATIVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF TRANSPORTATION MODES*



MASSACHUSETTS GASOLINE PRICE AND CONSUMPTION
1973 - 1979



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*"ENERGY CONSUMPTION FOR TRANSPORTATION IN THE U. S." ORNL REPORT NSF-EP-15, OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY (APRIL 1973)

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

(MJTC)

Community Representative:

Ashburnham:	William Fichtel
Ashby:	Dexter Gilchrest
Ayer:	Ruth Proctor, Maurice MacDonald
Clinton:	Clark Hanebry
Fitchburg:	Joyce Huff
Gardner:	Wayne Walker
Groton:	Dann Chamberlain
Harvard:	Mary Jane Gregg
Hubbardston:	Nick Chase
Lancaster:	James Chalke, Harry Shepardson
Leominster:	Lt. Matteo Ciccone, William Murrah
Lunenburg:	Einard Warpula, Robert Ebersole
Shirley:	Robert McBrine
Sterling:	William Kaminski, Dorothy Rockwell
Templeton:	Neil Cullen
Townsend:	Dennis Jaehne
Westminster:	Peter Normandin, Mary Vedoe
Winchendon:	Robert Ganley

Exofficio Members are as follows:

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
  Walter Rolf
Massachusetts Department of Public Works, District #3
  John Fitzgerald
Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, and Bureau of Transportation Planning and Development
  Paul Patneaude
Federal Highway Administration
  Allan DeBlasio

Organizational Representative:

Amalgamated Transit Union Local #690
  Joseph Raimon, Alexander Svolis
Fitchburg, Department of Elder Affairs
  Bernard D. O'Neill
Greater Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce
  Frank Noonan
Greater Gardner Chamber of Commerce
  Herbert Neunherz
Leominster League of Women Voters
  Charlene Rocheleau
Nashua River Watershed Association
  Joyce Huff
Fitchburg League of Women Voters
  Anne Moore
Council on Aging
  Bedford Kaddy
Montachusett Opportunity Council
  Rev. Wayne Shontz
Northern Worcester County Board of Realtors
  Richard Woodruff
Retired Men's Club
  Bedford Kaddy

Notice:

The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee meets the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the MRPC Offices (150 Main Street, Fitchburg).

MRPC OFFICERS

George Glasson, Chairman - Westminster
Nathaniel Dexter, V. Chairman - Lancaster
Walter Rolf Secretary - Templeton
Joyce Huff, Treasurer - Fitchburg
Dennis Jaehne, Asst. Treasurer - Townsend

MJTC OFFICERS

William Murrah, Chairperson - Leominster
Joyce Huff, V. Chairperson - Fitchburg
Ruth Proctor, Secretary - Ayer

MRPC STAFF

Mohammed H. Khan *	Planning Director
Joseph M. Distefano*	Asst. Director/Princ. Planner
Richard Santner	Regional Planner IV
Susan Haber	Regional Planner III
Kathleen Kelley*	Regional Planner II
Nathan Smith*	Regional Planner II
William Steffens*	Regional Planner II
Patricia Donaghy	Graphics/Draftsperson
Laila Michaud	Office Administrator
Lorna Fredd	Accountant/Research Assistant
Ruth Twomley*	Secretary II
Donna Hills *	Secretary II

CETA FUNDED STAFF

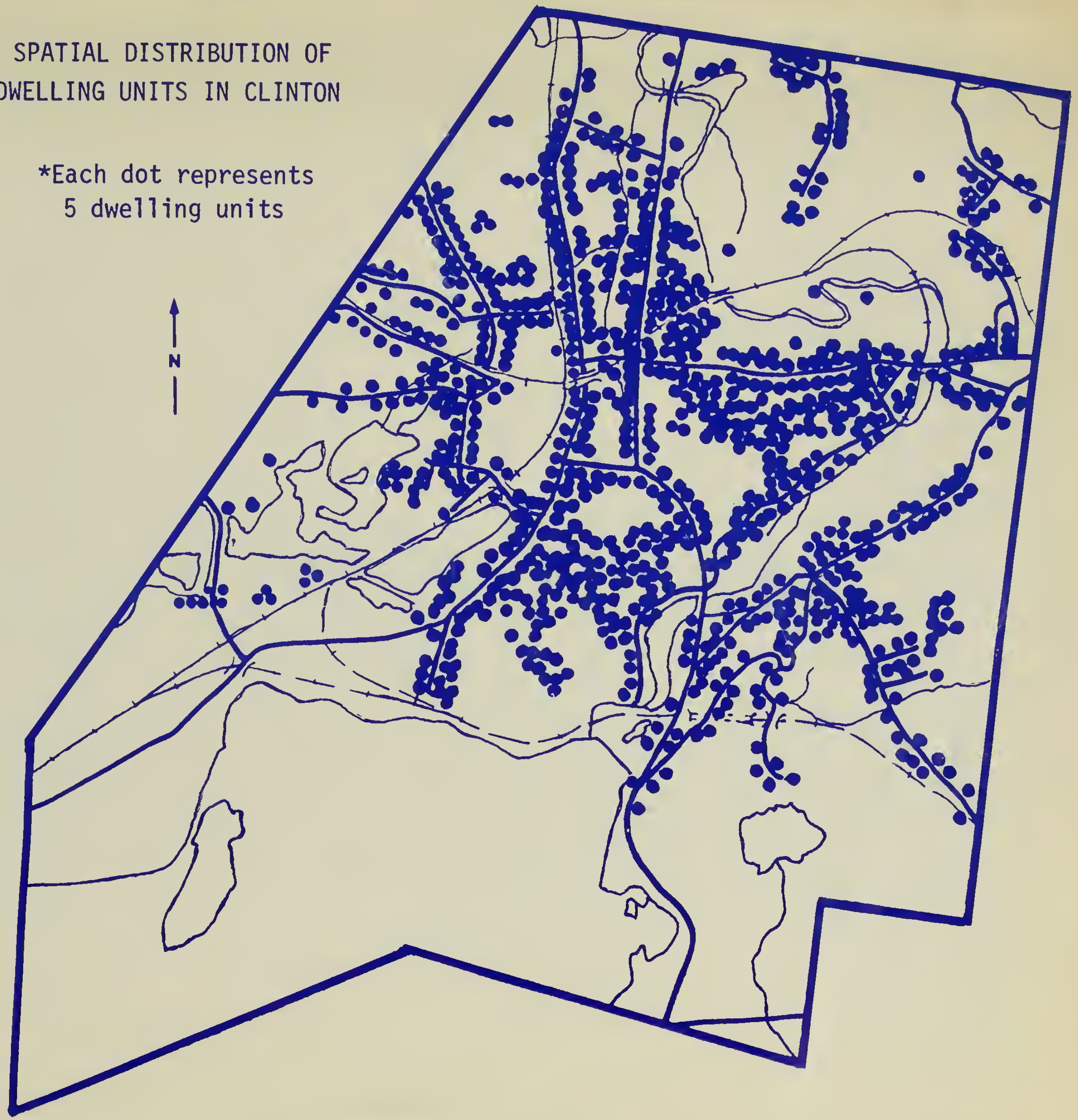
Larry Cassassa	Regional Planner I
Harald Jordan*	Regional Planner I
Barbara Lippel	Regional Planner I
Beverly Lynch	Regional Planner I
Judith Atherton	Regional Planning Aide
Joan MacPhee*	Regional Planning Aide
Alan MacPherson	Jr. Regional Planning Aide
John Sisoian	Jr. Regional Planning Aide
Joanna Hopkins*	Cartographic Aide
Susan Morse	Clerical Assistant
Sharon Koski *	Secretary II
Martha Pelto*	Secretary I
Bertha Turula	Library Aide

INTERNS

Dennis Randall*
Mark Sweatman

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
150 Main Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420

SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF DWELLING UNITS IN CLINTON



*Each dot represents 5 dwelling units

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TRANSPORTATION ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT

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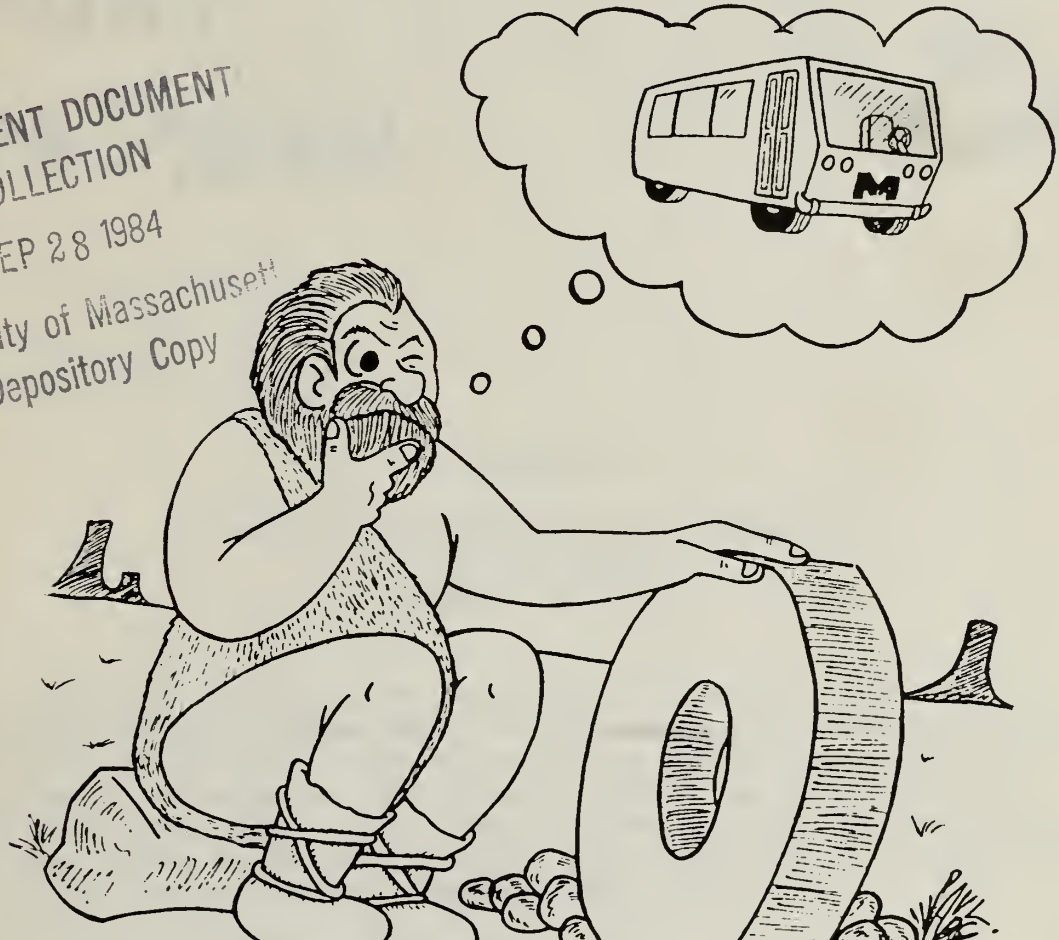
COLLECTION
SEP 28 1984
University of Massachuset
Depository Copy



1979 - 1980

TRANSPORTATION ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT

1979-1980

PREPARED BY

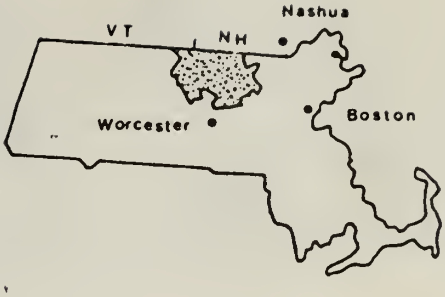
MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
150 Main Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420

This report was prepared under Contract #20717 with the Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Financial assistance was also provided by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission and do not necessarily reflect those of the MDPW, FHWA, UMTA, or EPA.

Principal contributors to this report include:

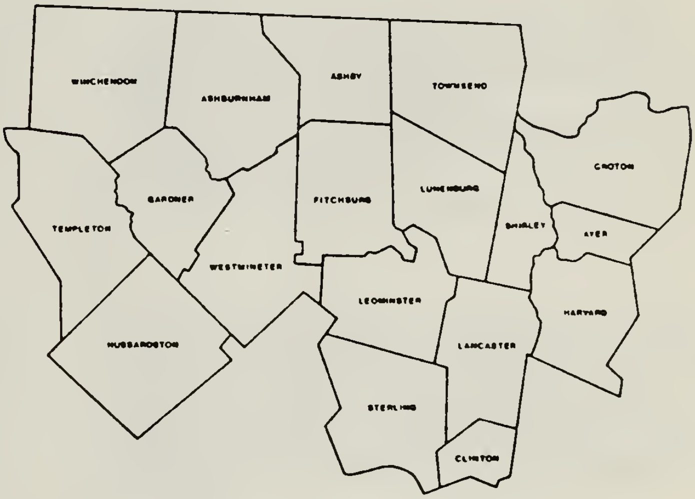
Dana Woodbury	Assistant Director/Principal Planner
Kathleen Kelley	Regional Planner III
Sandra Frodin	Regional Planner II
Patricia Donaghy	Graphics/Draftsperson
Paul Absi	Graphics Aide
Susan Goguen	Secretary II

THE MONTACHUSETT REGION



The Montachusett Region is located within 50 miles of the Boston Metropolitan area and within 25 miles of the Worcester and Nashua, New Hampshire urbanized areas. It encompasses approximately 513 square miles and has a population of approximately 176,000. The region is sparsely settled with the exception of the urban areas of Fitchburg, Clinton, Gardner and Leominster. The region's many state forests, waterways and mountains provide a naturally beautiful environment and its location provides easy access to large metropolitan areas.

REGIONAL PLANNING



The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) was formed under Chapter 40B of the General Laws of Massachusetts. It is a regional agency created by, and responsible to, its seventeen member communities. MRPC is responsible for comprehensive regional planning, including transportation planning, which must be consistent with and integrated into the region's comprehensive long range land use, urban development, environmental protection policy, and energy conservation goals. MRPC maintains an on-going analysis of existing travel conditions, transportation facilities, and management of transportation systems. MRPC also monitors and forecasts the region's economic, social, and land use activities in view of potential transportation demands.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The transportation goals, policies and objectives for the Montachusett Region are presented below:

Overall Transportation Goal

SAFE, RELIABLE, LOW COST TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE MONTACHUSETT REGION FOR THE MOVEMENT OF ALL PEOPLES AND GOODS

Policies	Objectives
A roadway and highway system made more efficient, safer, less congested and more economical.	- Improve deficient roadways to bring them to an adequate level of service - Minimize accidents and congestion - Minimize the costs of all modes
*****	*****
Improve the mobility of those without automobiles and provide an incentive for those who wish less dependency on automobile use.	- Provide appropriate and innovative public transit programs designed to increase transit ridership - Provide plans for interregional rail passenger service - Provide a regional bikeway plan
*****	*****
Improve and expand transportation services for the elderly and handicapped	- Provide coordination and technical assistance to social transportation services to generate more efficient service - Secure available state and federal aid for improved elderly and handicapped services
*****	*****
Public transportation and roadway systems that are intergral with and responsible to the configurations of present and future land uses	- Reduce pollution problems - Increase energy efficiency - Improve facility usage delineation; i.e. through versus local
*****	*****
Improve transportation systems to facilitate movement of goods and materials leading to greater growth potential in regional commerce	- Provide maximum reliability and equitable accessibility to regional opportunities - Provide plans for improved rail, air and truck freight movements

3-C PLANNING PROCESS MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

In urbanized areas, approval of federally aided transportation projects is contingent upon their being based on a federally certified 3C (Cooperative, Comprehensive, and Continuing) transportation process. 3C transportation plans must be:

Cooperative - responding to local and regional needs, as well as federal and state policies.

Comprehensive - considering all modes of transportation, consistent with regional growth and development plans, and linking transportation programs with land use, economic, social and environmental concerns.

Continuing - being dynamic and able to be revised to meet changing needs as public attitudes, socio-economic or environmental conditions change.

The MRPC, Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MRTA), Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW), and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) have been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which has the responsibility for carrying out the 3C process.

The MPO is guided by the citizen advisory committee known as the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC). The MJTC is composed of:

a) One representative of each MRPC city and town (plus Harvard) as nominated by the Mayor or Board of Selectmen.

b) One representative of each MRPC city and town (plus Harvard) as appointed by the Planning Board.

c) Ex-officio representatives of the MRPC, DPW, and EOTC.

d) Other representatives of various public and private institutions as accepted by MJTC.

The MJTC acts as a liaison between Montachusett residents and the MPO. The MRPC staff performs the technical work activities described in the Unified Work Program and provides technical assistance to local communities. The MRPC staff provides transportation study information, establishes transportation planning priorities, performs duties of a regional clearinghouse for proposed projects, and serves as a public information center for transportation issues. Thus, transportation development decisions are based not only on state and local policies but on increased technical information and increased citizen input.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

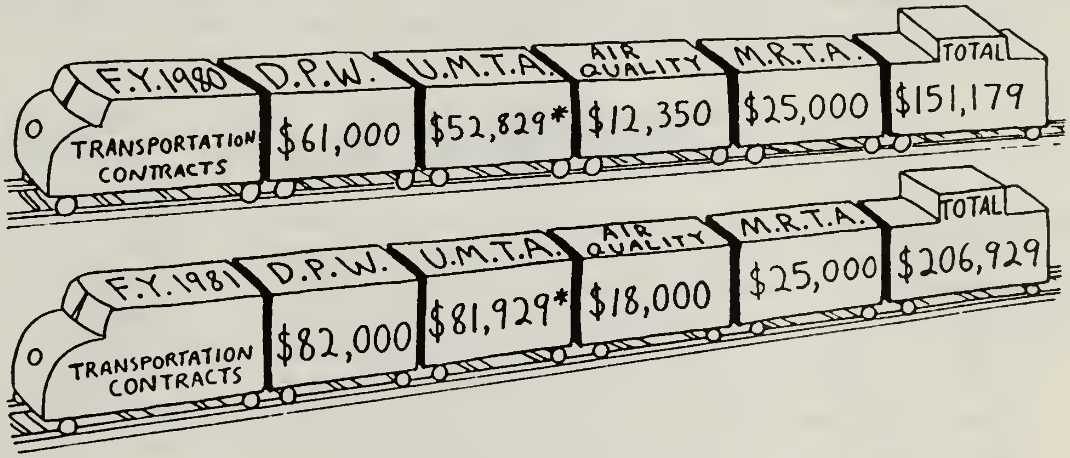
Public Participation is a key element in the regional planning process. Public involvement is absolutely necessary to ensure cooperation among communities and comprehensive approaches to regional issues. Planning is only successful when people think about the future and participate in developing and implementing plans.

MEETING NOTICE

The MJTC meets regularly on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the MRPC Conference Room. If you are interested in regional highway concerns, mass transit, rail service, or other regional transportation issues, please attend the meetings and participate in the decision making process.

The MRPC staff is also available to provide information and assistance at the MRPC Office, 150 Main Street, Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420, or by phone at 617-345-7376.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT



* Urban Mass Transportation Administartion grants include a required 20% local funding match provided by the MRPC communities.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

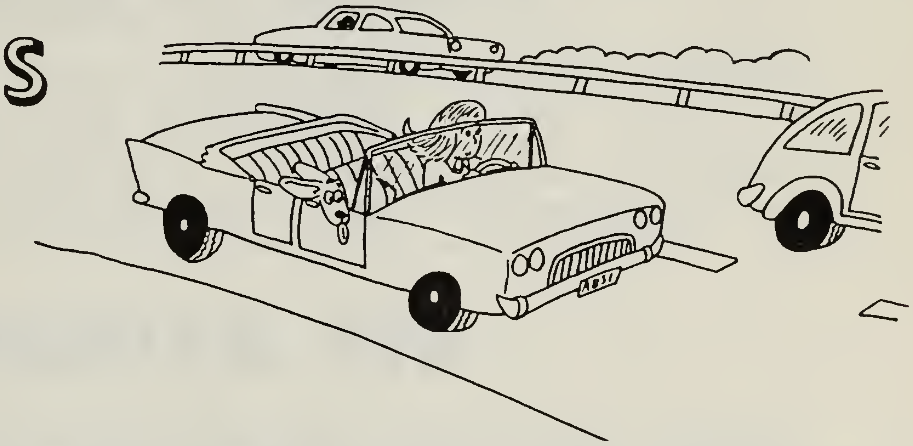
The Transportation Plan was completed in November, 1979. It sets the basic transportation policy for the region and is designed to be consistent with the region's comprehensive long range land use plan, urban development objectives, and the area's overall social, economic, environmental, system performance and energy conservation goals and objectives. Air quality guidelines now also require MPOs to consider the potential for reducing transportation-related emissions in the development of plans and policies.

The plan consists of two major elements - a Long Range Element and a Transportation System Management Element. The Long Range Element defines the long range transportation needs of the region, identifies new transportation policies and facilities and major changes in existing facilities.

In the Montachusett Region, committed long range projects include I-190, the Route 140 Gardner bypass, and the upgrading of Route 2 from Fitchburg westerly to Gardner. These three projects will benefit highway users in terms of lower vehicle operating costs while providing safer operating conditions, and in the case of I-190 stimulating the region's economy.

The transportation Systems Management Element is designed to meet short range transportation needs. It presents low-cost, non-capital intensive improvements to the system such as traffic flow improvements, safety improvements, bikeways and carpooling programs.

HIGHWAYS

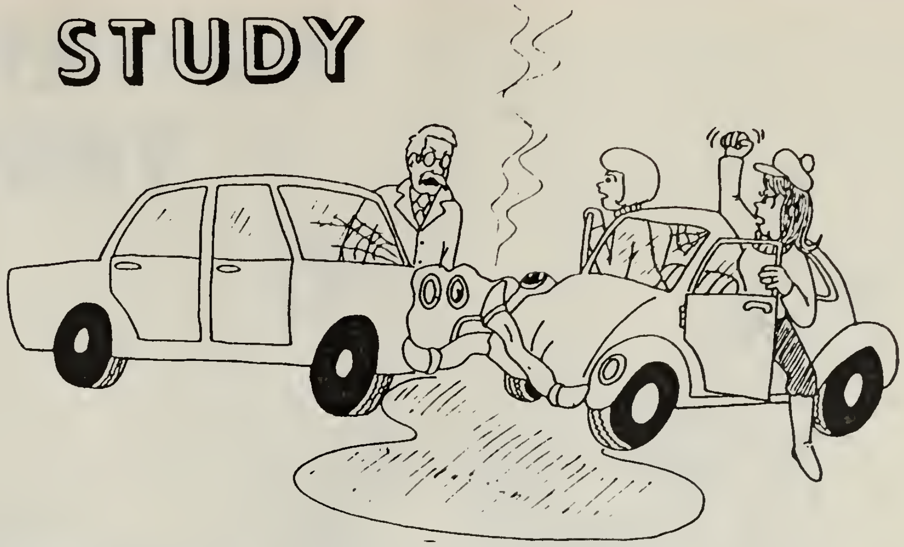


The private automobile is the predominant mode of transportation in the Montachusett Region. As a result, highways and highway planning play a major role in the region's socio-economic growth.

SYSTEMS PLANNING

During the past year, the transportation staff, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Public Works, Bureau of Transportation Planning and Development has continued its efforts in developing a highway systems model for the Montachusett Region. The 1975 network has been completed and calibrated and a set of external growth factors has been developed along with a methodology for their use in the preparation of the 1985 and 2005 travel demand analyses. When complete, this model will be used to project vehicle travel patterns for the years 1985 and 2005. In addition to identifying long range problems, it will also be useful in testing corridor planning study alternatives, and highway improvements, as well as land use, air quality user cost, and energy consumption impacts. It is anticipated that the model will be operational and provide useful information for the preparation of next year's update to the Transportation Plan.

ACCIDENT STUDY



Planning personnel have been working on an "Investigation of Accident Causality At High Accident Locations In The Montachusett Region." This report will document by municipality those roadway sections and intersections that exhibit a high number of accidents and accompanying social costs in terms of personal injury and property damage. It will also document the vehicle-related accidents resulting in loss of life. Based on causal factors, a list of proposed improvements will be developed to decrease accident risk at each location.

ROAD SURFACE MAPS

Road Surface Maps have been prepared and distributed to communities throughout the region. Over a ten year period the Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW) sent road crews out to check all roads within the state. Roads were rated by bumps, cracks, and frost heaves (width of pavement was not considered). The information was entered in the computer and results were sent to the Regional Planning Agencies to transfer to maps for their individual communities.

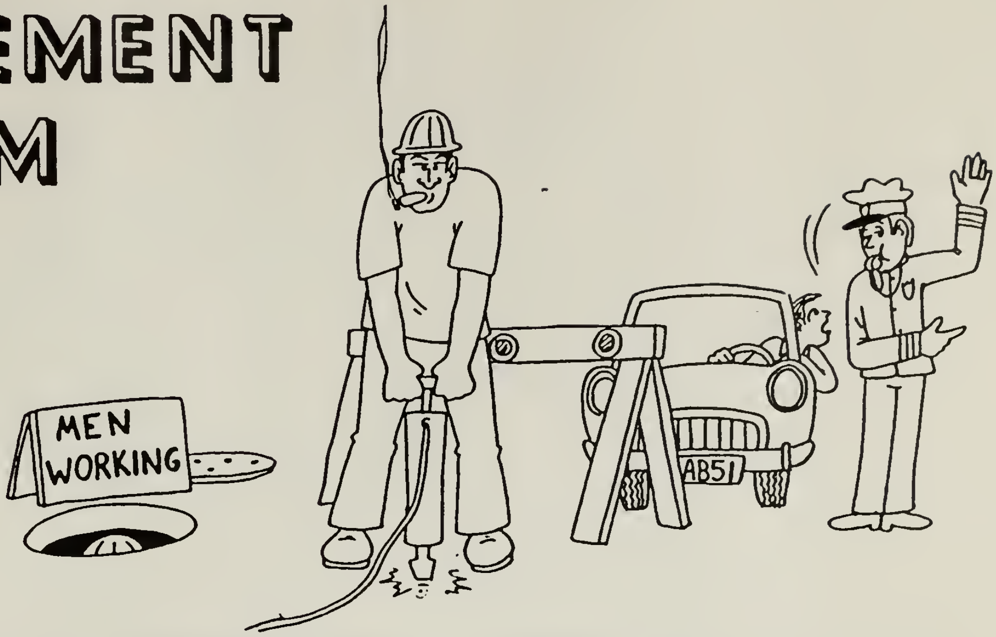
GROTON - ROUTE 119

On December 10, 1979 the Massachusetts Department of Public Works, Bureau of Transportation Planning and Development authorized MRPC to conduct a preliminary investigation of Route 119 in Groton. The preliminary investigation resulted in several recommendations for improving present travel on Route 119 and dealing with expected future travel growth. They include:

1. An engineering study should be performed to develop specific improvements focusing on the need to reconstruct and/or widen North Main Street, safety and capacity improvements to Boston Road, and various intersection improvements.
2. A parking study should be conducted to identify locations where off-street parking facilities can be developed and existing on-street parking should be phased out to improve traffic flows on Main Street through the town center.
3. Scheduled resurfacing of North Main Street should be carried out in the spring of 1980.

Upon review of MRPC's preliminary investigation findings, the Transportation Subcommittee of the Groton Growth Management Program presented its recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. The Selectmen have taken the recommendations under advisement, and no further action is known to have been taken.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

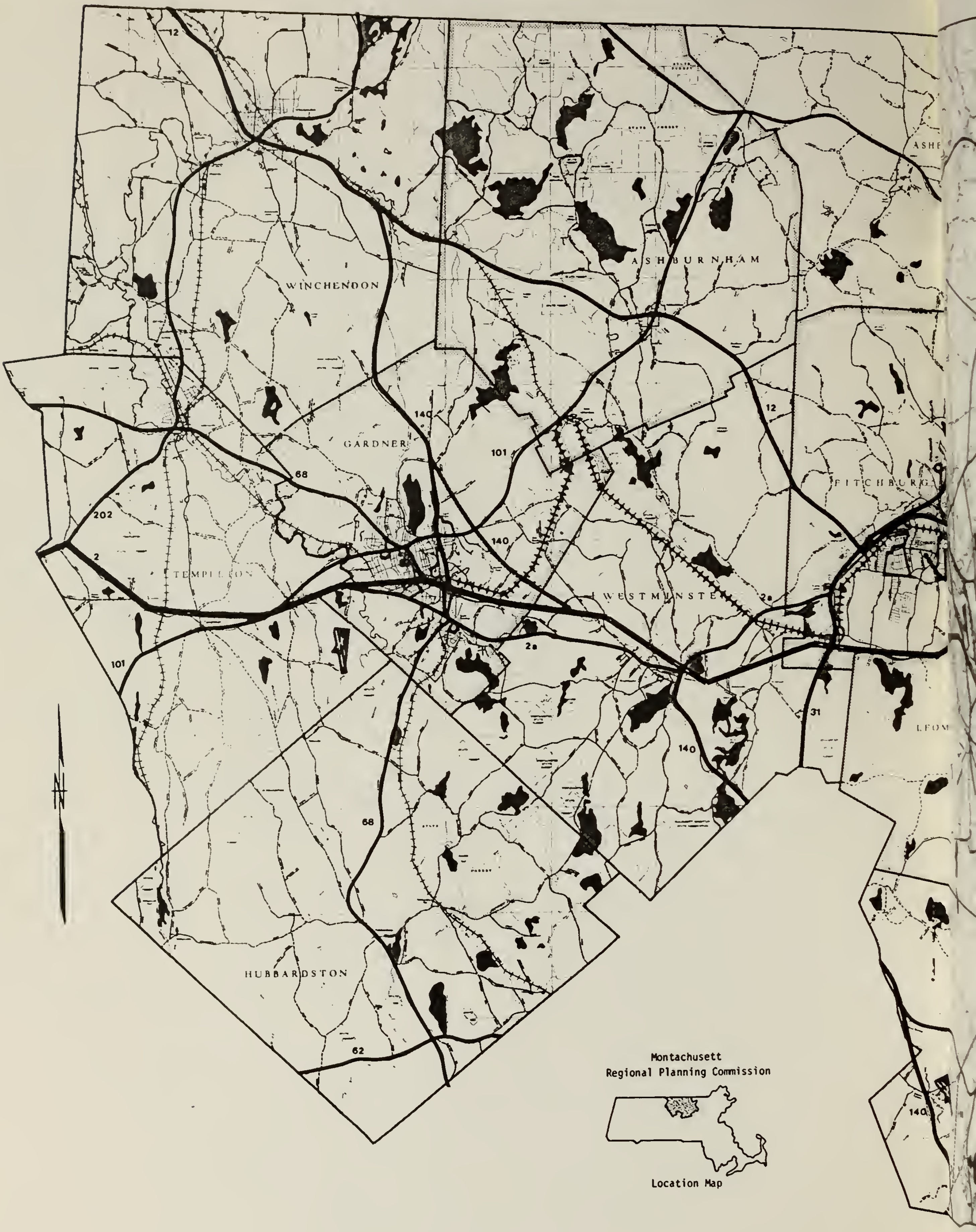


The TIP is a compilation of improvements slated for implementation in the upcoming year. The proposed projects are recommended for development and given a regional priority by local, regional and state planning participants. This process is performed through the MJTC and is carried out on a continuing basis. Prioritization reflects the Region's need for particular transportation improvements. Project action phases include: Corridor Planning Studies, Preliminary Engineering (preparation of Plans & Estimates), Right-of-Way Aquisitions and Construction.

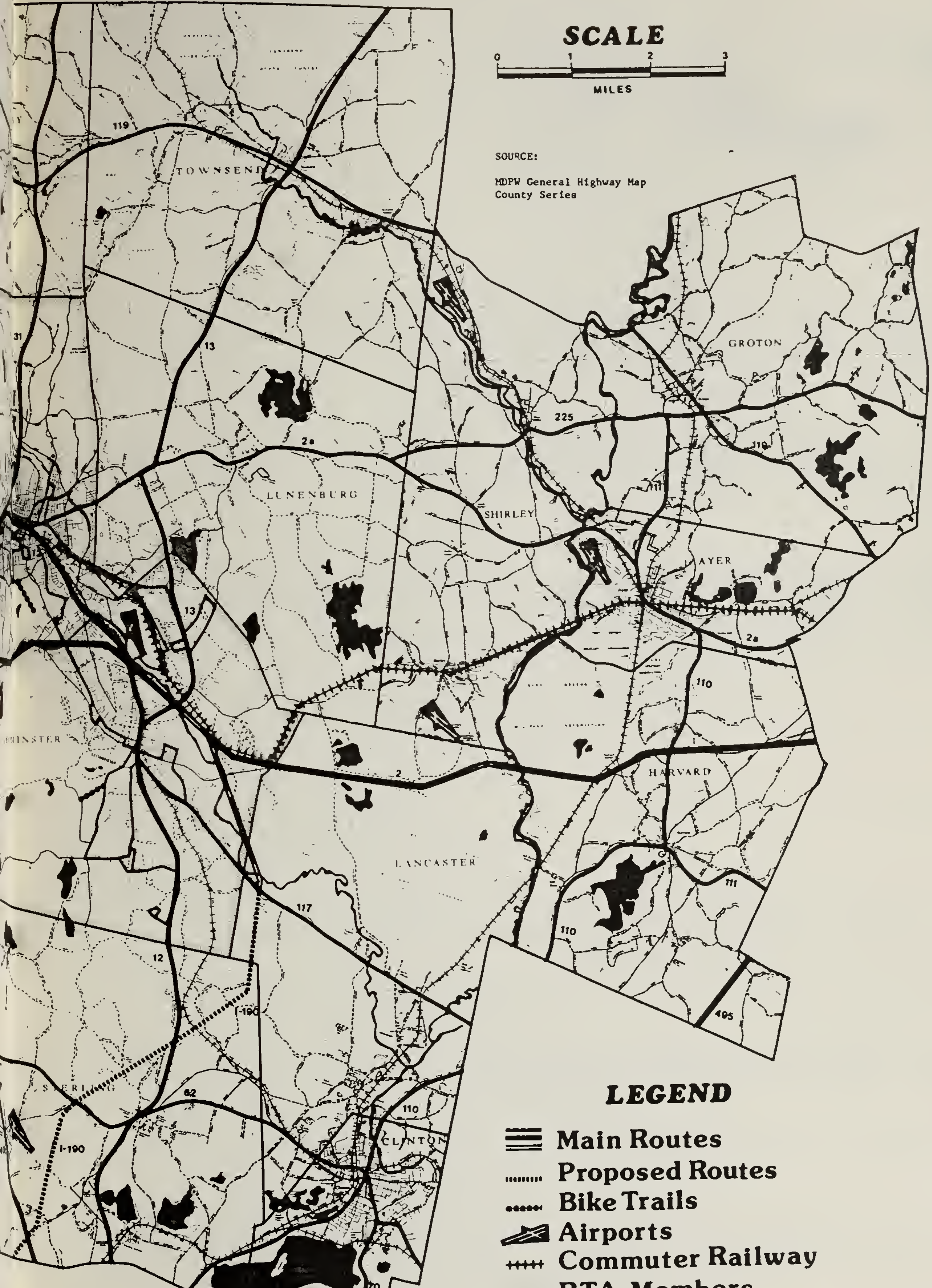
TIP 1980 OVERALL REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The Federal Fiscal Year 1980 TIP lists the following Overall Regional Priorities:

1A. I-190
1. Route 2 Improvements, Fitchburg-Leominster-Westminster
2. Route 140 Bypass Construction, Gardner-Westminster
3. Route 2/13 Interchange Improvement - Leominster
4. Route 101 Improvement - Templeton
5. Fitchburg Connector
6. Clinton Connector
7. Ayer Road, Route 110/111 Improvement, Harvard
8. Route 31 Reconstruction, Ashby
9. Matthews Street Improvement, Gardner
10. Laurel Street, Kimball Street and Putnam Street Reconstruction, Fitchburg
11. Groton-Shirley Road Improvements, Ayer
12. Route 68 Resurfacing, Hubbardston
13. Barre Road Reconstruction, Templeton
14. Betty Spring Road and Bridge Improvements, Gardner
15. Fisher Road Reconstruction, Fitchburg
16. Ashburnham Hill Road, Scott Road, Rindge Road Reconstruction, Fitchburg
17. Industrial Road, Crawford Street Connector Construction, Leominster-Fitchburg
18. Harvard Street Reconstruction, Leominster
19. Route 2A Improvements, Lunenburg
20. Route 119 Improvements, Ashby



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATI



SOURCE:

MDPW General Highway Map
County Series

LEGEND

- Main Routes
- Proposed Routes
- Bike Trails
- Airports
- Commuter Railway
- RTA Members
- Bus Routes
- Waterways

SPORTATION MAP

AIR QUALITY

The Clean Air Act Amendments by the U.S. Congress in August, 1977 require that each state determine whether or not it meets health and welfare-related air quality standards. Non-attainment areas are required to achieve air quality standards by December 31, 1982 with provisions of extensions to December 31, 1987 for areas with severe ozone and carbon monoxide problems.

In November of 1979, the MRPC was awarded a Section 175 Air Quality Grant and charged with the responsibility of identifying emission problems in the Region, distributing information on air pollution and developing control measures which can be implemented to improve the Region's air quality.

The MRPC has participated in monthly meetings of the statewide Air Quality Task Force and has established an Air Quality Advisory Committee in the Montachusett Region. The transportation staff initiated a review of local growth policies and a screening process for identifying carbon monoxide hot spots in the Region. Provisions were made to incorporate a region-wide mobile source emissions estimation into the Region's highway planning model.

In May of 1980 the following Air Quality Amendments were made to the regional goals and objectives:

Transportation Sub-Goal
Formulate transportation planning and strategies that attain and maintain National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Transportation Objectives:
Inventory potential air quality problems in the Montachusett Region as they affect the health and welfare of the people in the Region.

Establish appropriate organizational mechanisms to coordinate transportation and air quality planning activities.

Develop in cooperation with local governments practical, feasible and effective transportation control measures that when implemented will reduce transportation-related air pollution and improve air quality.

Assist municipalities in the implementation of transportation control measures to reduce transportation related air pollution.

Environmental Quality Objectives:
Assist municipalites in developing an understanding of specific air quality problems and developing plans and reasonable strategies to attain and maintain National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

The 1977 Amendments also require each Region in the state to examine the Reasonably Available Control Measures (RACMs) listed below. RACM analysis in the Montachusett Region will be initiated in the coming months.

Measures to be examined by each MPO:
- Programs for improved public transit
- Programs to establish exclusive bus and carpool lanes and areawide carpool programs
- Programs to limit portions of road surfaces or certain sections of the metropolitan area to the use of common carriers, both as to time and place
- Programs for long-range transit improvements involving new transportation policies and transportation facilities or major changes in existing facilities
- Programs to control on-street parking
- Programs to construct new parking facilities and operate existing parking facilities for the purpose of park and ride lots and fringe parking
- Programs to limit portions of road surfaces or certain sections of the metropolitan area to the use of non-motorized vehicles or pedestrian use, both as to time and place
- Provisions for employer participation in programs to encourage carpooling, vanpooling, mass transit, bicycling, and walking
- Programs for secure bicycle storage facilities and other facilities, including bicycle lanes, for the convenience and protection of bicyclists, in both public and private areas
- Programs of staggered hours of work
- Programs to institute road user charges, tolls, or differential rates to discourage single occupancy automobile trips
- Programs to reduce emissions by improvements in traffic flow

Measures to be examined on a statewide basis by DEQE:
- Motor vehicle inspection and maintenance program
- Programs to control vapor emissions from fuel transfer and storage operations and operations using solvents
- Programs to control extended idling of vehicles

BIKEWAYS

As the cost of other transportation modes increases, the attractiveness of the bicycle for commuting, shopping, personal business and recreation will increase. Planning activities must provide for the safety and security of bicycle riders.

The bikeway planning process at the regional planning level consists of the following three procedures:

1. Assisting communities in the development of bikeway master plans and proposals.

2. Developing a regional bikeway master plan, including priorities, and

3. Reviewing submitted proposals.

Phase I of the Fitchburg Parkhill/Coggshall Bikeway Project has been completed and Phase II is in the planning stage. The community of Harvard also has plans for a bikepath on Pond Road.

AIRPORTS

Air service facilities are provided to the Montachusett Region at six airports, with the most active being Fitchburg Municipal Airport. The airport serves local and regional business groups recreational flyers, and has a flight instruction school. The Fitchburg Airport handles approximately 68,000 flights per year. The Fitchburg Airport Commission has engaged a consultant with the aid of federal funds to undertake a Master Plan Study.

The Moore Army Airfield at Fort Devens in Ayer is used solely for military operation and flight training. The Gardner Municipal Airport is used primarily for recreational and business flights, as are the Sterling and Groton airports. The Shirley airport is used by business and personal flights, as well as by a flight instruction school.

RAIL SERVICE

Extensive freight service is provided to the Montachusett Region by the Boston and Maine Corporation, with the Consolidated Rail Corporation and the Providence and Worcester Railroad serving in a lesser capacity. Commuter passenger service from Acton to Boston has been extended westward into the Montachusett Region to the City of Gardner. (See Commuter Rail below).

COMMUTER RAIL

In January 1980, the MRTA contracted with Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) to have its operator the Boston and Maine Railroad provide commuter rail service to the Montachusett Region. The MRTA has consistently maintained that it will continue to support commuter rail service to the Montachusett Region so long as the local share of costs is substantially state supported.

This new service includes stops at Gardner, Fitchburg, North Leominster, Ayer and Littleton. The additional access to metropolitan Boston afforded by this service provides Montachusett residents with expanded cultural, educational, and employment opportunities. The commuter rail service also has tremendous potential for regional energy conservation, economic development, and air quality benefits.

In March MRTA/MRPC staff surveyed riders to determine origin, frequency of use, and trip purposes as a basis for future decision making regarding service improvements. At that time the train was serving over 350 daily riders.

MASS TRANSIT

The Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MRTA) was formed on August 7, 1978 by the cities of Fitchburg, Leominster and Gardner. On July 30, 1979 service to the Fitchburg/Leominster area was implemented. The service consists of eleven fixed routes, five within Fitchburg, three within Leominster, and three inter-city. Elderly and handicapped individuals who cannot use the fixed-route service are now being provided transportation through use of a lift-equipped van. The Special Service is provided during peak hours Monday through Friday.

There was a referendum on the November 6, 1979 ballot in Fitchburg, to determine whether or not the city should remain a member of the MRTA. A 4-1 vote in favor of RTA membership gave a strong indication of support for continuing transit services. In the first seven months of service in Fitchburg and Leominster, ridership increased from approximately 3,000 riders to over 7,000 weekly.

MRPC also provided technical assistance to Gardner in preparing an application for federal funding for transit services. The Gardner bus service began May 5, 1980. Service is provided by two mini-buses on a route which was designed to service in particular the elderly population of the city, shopping centers, and public institutions. In Gardner, Special Services for the elderly and handicapped are provided in the same manner as similar services in Fitchburg and Leominster.

TRANSITION PLAN

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap in any program receiving Federal assistance. It mandates that a transition plan be prepared to identify transportation improvements and policies needed to achieve program accessibility. MRPC prepared a Transition Plan for the Montachusett Regional Transity Authority in cooperation with a citizens' participation committee, local officials and transit authority management. MART transit vehicles, facilities, services, policies and practices were examined to determine accessibility to elderly and handicapped individuals.

All modifications determined to be necessary will be implemented by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in conjunction with the management of the Montachusett Regional Bus Company and the Administrator of the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority. This portion of the Transition Plan process determined that the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority area would meet the program accessibility requirements by July 1, 1982 with all of its fixed-route and para-transit vehicles accessible, all services and facilities accessible and policies and practices modified.

TRANSIT MARKETING

Since implementation of fixed-route and special service transit on July 30, 1979 the MRPC staff instituted several marketing programs. These included a VIP Ride and Shop Program, Dime-A-Ride Program and five new Pass Outlets. News releases, radio advertisements and posters for distribution to businesses in the area have been prepared. A marketing report documenting all promotional and marketing materials and strategies developed for the MART program was prepared.

In March, 1980, MRPC hired FitzGerald-Toole & Co., Inc., to undertake a marketing program for transit services in Gardner, Fitchburg and Leominster in conjunction with the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority. To date the marketing program has included:

1. A ribbon cutting ceremony held at Mount Wachusett Community College in conjunction with implementation of service in Gardner on May 5, 1980.

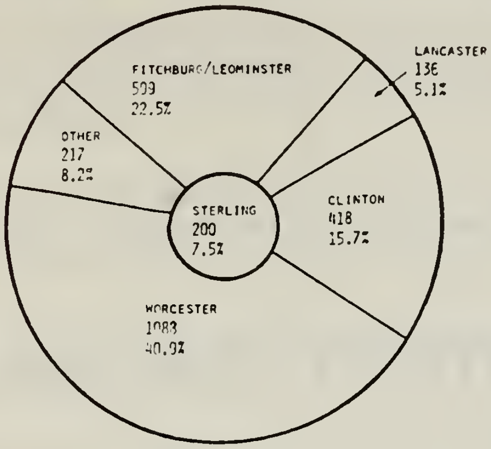
2. A joint marketing program was developed between Leominster businessmen and MART for their Civic Days Sale and between Fitchburg's VIP members and MART for their Downtown Sale Days both of which were held in June. The joint program included merchants displaying the MART logo in their special promotions for the sale and MART in return reduced its fares to a dime on all routes for one day during the particular sale.

3. MRPC staff and representatives of FitzGerald-Toole met with the Dean of Students at Fitchburg State College to discuss possible promotions aimed at increasing student ridership. One immediate result is preparation of a slide program to be shown during the August orientation program.

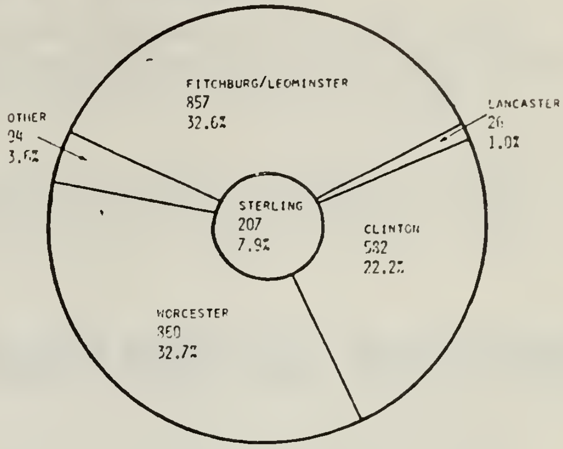
4. A series of CALL US MART newspaper advertisements have been prepared for the three local newspapers. They include MEET MART (Gardner), CALL US MART (Fitchburg/Leominster), and SHOPPERS CALL US MART (VIP orientation for Fitchburg) (Intown and loop emphasis in Leominster).

5. Radio spots were prepared for WGAW in Gardner.

Destination of Sterling worktrips per week, total survey response.



Destination of Sterling shopping/personal business trips per week, total survey response.



As part of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission's Technical Studies Grant, a Latent Demand Study was undertaken in the Town of Sterling. In February of 1980, a mail-out/mail-back attitude survey was conducted in Sterling to identify the attitudes of residents toward transit and determine their transportation desires. The following recommendations were developed.

1. It is recommended that Sterling join the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority because there is a strong gravitation of shopping and business trips towards the Fitchburg and Leominster area. In addition, because MRTA is a smaller entity than the Worcester Regional Transit Authority it will be more responsive to Sterling's needs.

2. Sterling could financially benefit immediately by switching its elderly van from a city-funded basis to the Transit Authority funded basis. This will insure at least a 50 percent reduction of the cost and a potential of another 25 percent reduction in the future.

3. There should be some detailed studies made by the MRPC to institute bus service between Sterling to the Fitchburg/Leominster area possibly to North Leominster's commuter rail station for a Boston connection. This could be done during the fall with relatively minimum cost for Sterling.

4. Possible exploration of bus service to Clinton via Sterling might benefit Sterling because Clinton is a strong employment center for Sterling residents and at the same time Clinton has interest in bus service from the Fitchburg and Leominster area. Therefore, bus service costs would be shared by Sterling and Clinton.

5. Negotiations should start with the Worcester Regional Transit Authority to provide a service either to a point where Worcester Regional bus service could be met (West Boylston or Clinton) or direct connection to Worcester Center. This will be an express service and may be combined with a Fitchburg/Leominster service to Worcester. (Existing Trailways D.P.U. rights should be investigated before this service can be instituted).

On April 17, 1980 a public hearing was held to review the recommendations. At a town meeting in May it was voted that Sterling not join the transit authority at this time.

FUTURE CONCERNS

ENERGY CONTINGENCY PLAN

The increased cost and reduced availability of petroleum-based fuels for transportation has produced a need for energy contingency planning. It is anticipated that MRPC will be preparing the regional energy contingency plan in the upcoming year.

MRPC will gather data and design the implementation measures necessary to meet essential transportation needs and preserve mobility and normal economic functioning in the event of an energy emergency.

GARDNER CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

The City of Gardner is seeking assistance to correct downtown parking and circulation problems. This assistance should be provided in conjunction with two other projects currently underway; planning for Gardner Heritage State Park and a study commissioned by Square One (the downtown merchants association). MRPC is currently negotiating with the City of Gardner to determine its level of involvement in this effort.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

MRPC will be preparing an update to its Regional Transportation Plan. The update will incorporate revised forecast travel demands resulting from application of the regional systems planning model, and updated information regarding all modes of travel, air quality, and energy conservation.

TESIP 1980

MRPC will assist the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (DEQE) in the preparation of the 1982 Transportation Element of the State Implementation Plan. MRPC will prepare the Montachusett Region's portion of the TESIP including a detailed analysis of Reasonably Available Control Measures for meeting National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

INTERMODAL TRANSFER FACILITY

In the late spring, a meeting at the Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce generated interest in the idea of an intermodal transfer facility for the City of Fitchburg. Several local business interests requested that the City and MRPC determine the feasibility of such a facility and identify what further steps would have to be taken, i.e. how and where to obtain funding, what plans and actions would be necessary, and by whom. MRPC is developing this information.

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY	APPOINTED BY SELECTMEN OR MAYOR	APPOINTED BY PLANNING BOARD
Ashburnham		
Ashby	Dexter Gilchrest	Walter Woodruff
Ayer	Ruth Proctor	Maurice MacDonald
Clinton		
Fitchburg		Thomas Cunningham Joyce Huff
Gardner	Robert Maliska	Arthur Young
Groton	Dann Chamberlain	
Harvard	Mary Jane Gregg	
Hubbardston	Robert Meagher	George Core
Lancaster	James Chalke	
Leominster	Thomas Picucci	William Murray
Lunenburg		
Shirley		Robert McBride
Sterling		William Kamm, Jr.
Templeton	Walter Rolf	
Townsend		
Westminster		Peter Normandin
Winchendon		Kim Posich

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Paul Patneaude	Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Barry Faulkner	Executive Office of Transportation and Construction
Walter Rolf	Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
Edward Silva	Federal Highway Administration

ORGANIZATION MEMBERS

Joyce Huff	Nashua River Watershed Association
John Clark	Montachusett Opportunity Council
Dennis Randall	League of Women Voters
Walter Rolf	Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
Walter Woodruff	North Worcester County Board of Realtors
Bedford Paddy	Fitchburg Council on Aging
Joseph Raimon	A.T.U. Local #690
Donald Frigoletto	Fitchburg Airport Commission

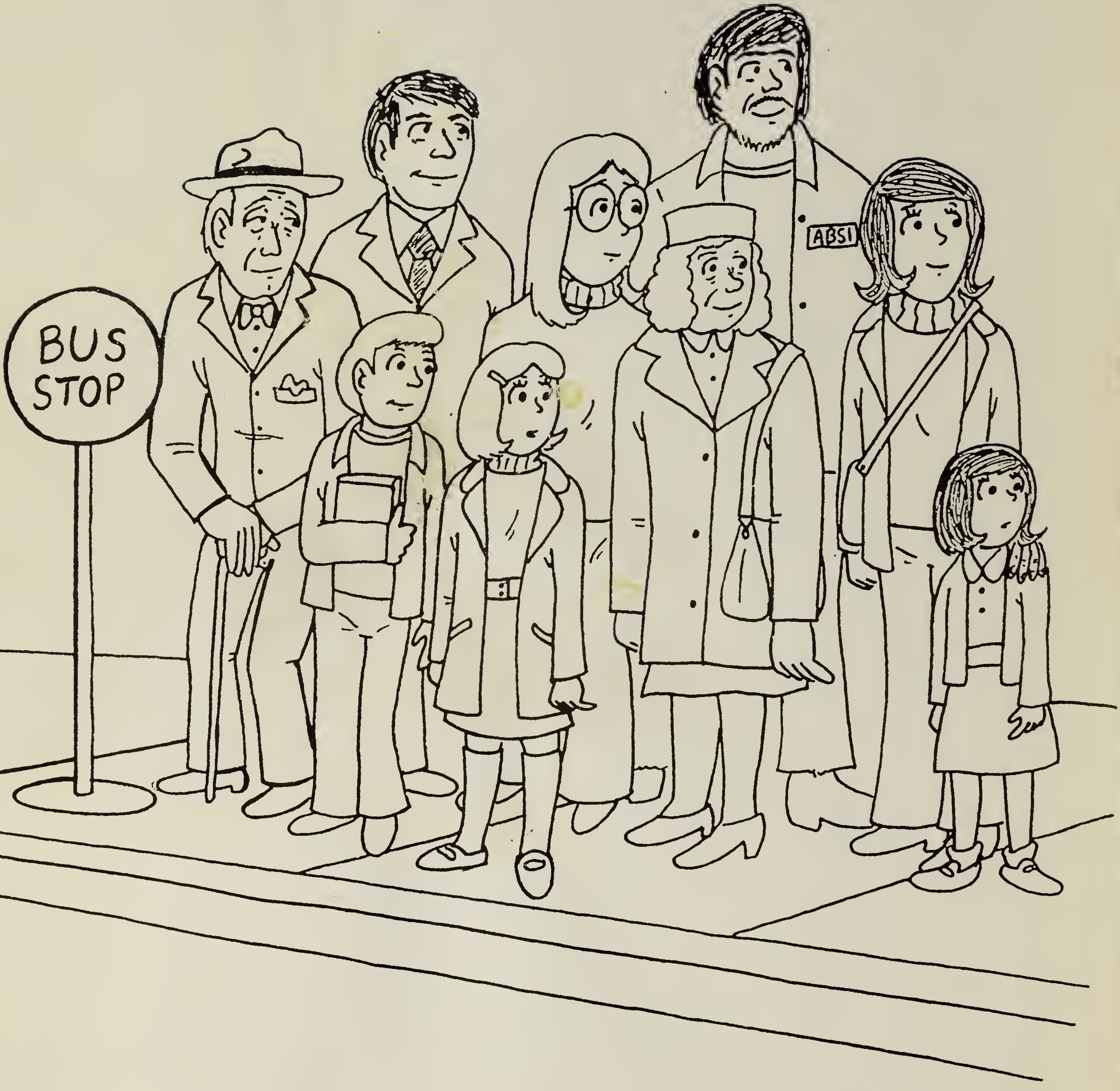
MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

1979 - 1980

MUNICIPALITY	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Ashburnham	Margaret Whitney	Patrick Sullivan
Ashby	Richard Woodruff	Samuel Sutcliffe
Ayer	Robert Douglas	Harriett Maxant
Clinton	Edward O'Brien	Kenneth Dwinells
Fitchburg	Joyce Huff	William Tuikka
Fort Devens	Robert Lee (NV)	
Gardner	Gerard Vautour/ Joseph Zub	Robert Maliska/ Daniel Martin
Groton	Alana Knuff	Norma Millet
Hubbardston	Albert Clark	Peter Bumpus
Lancaster	Nathaniel Dexter	Richard Neroni
Leominster	Gerald Cosgrove	Anthony Angelini
Lunenburg	David Demers	Barbara Schnuer
Shirley	Richard Hatch	Robert Manning
Sterling	John Hehir/ Peter Allaire	Dorothy Rockwell
Templeton	Walter Rolf	
Townsend	Carl Rutioliano	
Westminster	Dennis Baker	George Glasson
Winchendon	Donald Royea	Joseph Lillie, Jr.
Dept. of Community Affairs	Gary Brown (NV)	

STAFF

Mohammed H. Khan	Director
Richard Santner	Regional Planner IV
Dana Woodbury	Regional Planner IV
Michael Sylvia	Regional Planner III
Helen Waldorf	Regional Planner III
Kathleen Kelley	Regional Planner III
William Steffens	Regional Planner II
Kenneth Lewis	Regional Planner II
Nathan Smith	Regional Planner II
Richard Lefferts	Regional Planner II
Dianne Siergiej	Regional Planner II
Patrick Hickey	Regional Planner II
Mary-Jane Pederson	Regional Planner II
Harald Jordan	Regional Planner II
Mark Sweatman	Regional Planner I
Larry Casassa	Regional Planner I
Beverly Lynch	Regional Planner I
Judy Atherton	Regional Planning Aide
Alex Svolis	Regional Planning Aide
Joan MacPhee	Regional Planning Aide
Bevin Popolizio	Jr. Planning Aide
Alan Macpherson	Jr. Planning Aide
Mark Beaudette	Jr. Planning Aide
John Sisoian	Jr. Planning Aide
Brian Haverty	Jr. Planning Aide
Dennis Randall	Jr. Planning Aide
Patricia Donaghy	Graphics/Draftsperson
Joanna Hopkins	Graphics/Draftsperson
Lorna Fredd	Accountant/Research Assist.
Laila Michaud	Office Administrator
Ruth Twomley	Secretary II
Susan Parmenter	Secretary II
Susan Goguen	Secretary II
Donna Hills	Secretary II
Sharon Koski	Secretary II
Mary Parker	Secretary I
Martha Pelto	Secretary I
Lorraine Yeaman	Secretary I
Susan Morse	Senior Clerical Assistant
Jo-Ellen Wolski	Clerical Assistant
Anne Yeaple	Intern
Michael Savageau	Intern
Paul Absi	Graphics Aide
Bertha Turula	Library Aide


BUS STOP
ABSI

MASS. Y3. M8P1:2 /980-81

TRANSPORTATION ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT

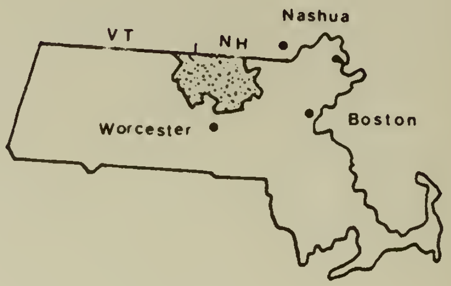
PONAKIN BRIDGE, PONAKIN ROAD, LANCASTER

The Ponakin Bridge, Ponakin Rd., Lancaster was built in 1871. It is the only pure version of the Post truss bridge remaining in the country; a patented design of S. S. Post and a major bridge form in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was most frequently used in the transcontinental railroad system.

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION
MAY 24 1983
University of Massachusetts
Depository Copy

1980-1981

THE MONTACHUSETT REGION



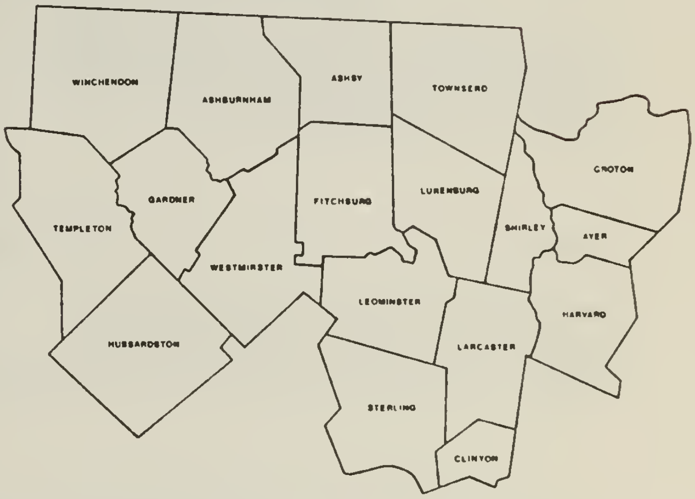
The Montachusett Region is located within 50 miles of the Boston Metropolitan area and within 25 miles of the Worcester and Nashua, New Hampshire urbanized areas. It encompasses approximately 513 square miles and has a population of approximately 176,000. The region is sparsely settled with the exception of the urban areas of Fitchburg, Clinton, Gardner and Leominster. The region's many state forests, waterways and mountains provide a naturally beautiful environment and its location provides easy access to large metropolitan areas.

I-190 AT ROUTE 2, LEOMINSTER

This report was prepared under Contract #20717 with the Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Financial assistance was also provided by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission and do not necessarily reflect those of the MDPW, FHWA, UMTA or EPA.

ROUTE 117 AND I-190 INTERCHANGE, LEOMINSTER

REGIONAL PLANNING



The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MRTA), Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW) and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) have been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which has the responsibility for carrying out the 3C process, (cooperative, comprehensive and continuing).

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) was formed under Chapter 40B of the General Laws of Massachusetts. It is a regional agency created by, and responsible to, its seventeen member communities. MRPC is responsible for comprehensive regional planning, including transportation planning, which must be consistent with and integrated into the region's comprehensive long range land use, urban development, environmental protection policy, and energy conservation goals. MRPC maintains an on-going analysis of existing travel conditions, transportation facilities, and management of transportation systems. MRPC also monitors and forecasts the region's economic, social, and land use activities in view of potential transportation demands.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The transportation goals, policies and objectives for the Montachusett Region are presented below:

Overall Transportation Goal

SAFE, RELIABLE, LOW COST TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE MONTACHUSETT REGION FOR THE MOVEMENT OF ALL PEOPLES AND GOODS

Policies	Objectives
A roadway and highway system made more efficient, safer, less congested and more economical.	- Improve deficient roadways to bring them to an adequate level of service - Minimize accidents and congestion - Minimize the costs of all modes
*****	*****
Improve the mobility of those without automobiles and provide an incentive for those who wish less dependency on automobile use.	- Provide appropriate and innovative public transit programs designed to increase transit ridership - Provide plans for interregional rail passenger service - Provide a regional bikeway plan
*****	*****
Improve and expand transportation services for the elderly and handicapped	- Provide coordination and technical assistance to social transportation services to generate more efficient service - Secure available state and federal aid for improved elderly and handicapped services
*****	*****
Public transportation and roadway systems that are integral with and responsible to the configurations of present and future land uses	- Reduce pollution problems - Increase energy efficiency - Improve facility usage delineation; i.e. through versus local
*****	*****
Improve transportation systems to facilitate movement of goods and materials leading to greater growth potential in regional commerce	- Provide maximum reliability and equitable accessibility to regional opportunities - Provide plans for improved rail, air and truck freight movements

SENIOR VAN AT THE JOHN J. GILMARTIN SENIOR CENTER,
FITCHBURG

In May of 1980 the following Air Quality Amendments were made to the regional goals and objectives:

Transportation Sub-Goal:
Formulate transportation plans and strategies that attain and maintain National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Transportation Objectives:
Inventory potential air quality problems in the Montachusett Region as they affect the health and welfare of the people in the Region.

Establish appropriate organizational mechanisms to coordinate transportation and air quality planning activities.

Develop in cooperation with local governments practical, feasible and effective transportation control measures that when implemented will reduce transportation related air pollution and improve air quality.

Assist municipalities in the implementation of transportation control measures to reduce transportation related air pollution.

Environmental Quality Objectives:
Assist Municipalities in developing an understanding of specific air quality problems and developing plans and reasonable strategies to attain and maintain National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

3-C PLANNING PROCESS MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

In urbanized areas, approval of federally aided transportation projects is contingent upon their being based on a federally certified 3C (Cooperative, Comprehensive, and Continuing) transportation process. 3C transportation plans must be:

Cooperative - responding to local and regional needs, as well as federal and state policies.

Comprehensive - considering all modes of transportation, consistent with regional growth and development plans, and linking transportation programs with land use, economic, social and environmental concerns.

Continuing - being dynamic and able to be revised to meet changing needs as public attitudes, socio-economic or environmental conditions change.

The MRPC, Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MRTA), Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW), and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) have been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which has the responsibility for carrying out the 3C process.

The MPO is guided by the citizen advisory committee known as the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC). The MJTC is composed of:

a) One representative of each MRPC city and town (plus Harvard) as nominated by the Mayor or Board of Selectmen.

b) One representative of each MRPC city and town (plus Harvard) as appointed by the Planning Board.

c) Ex-officio representatives of the MRPC, DPW, and EOTC.

d) Other representatives of various public and private institutions as accepted by MJTC.

The MJTC acts as a liaison between Montachusett residents and the MPO. The MRPC staff performs the technical work activities described in the Unified Work Program and provides technical assistance to local communities. The MRPC staff provides transportation study information, establishes transportation planning priorities, performs duties of a regional clearinghouse for proposed projects, and serves as a public information center for transportation issues. Thus, transportation development decisions are based not only on state and local policies but on increased technical information and increased citizen input.

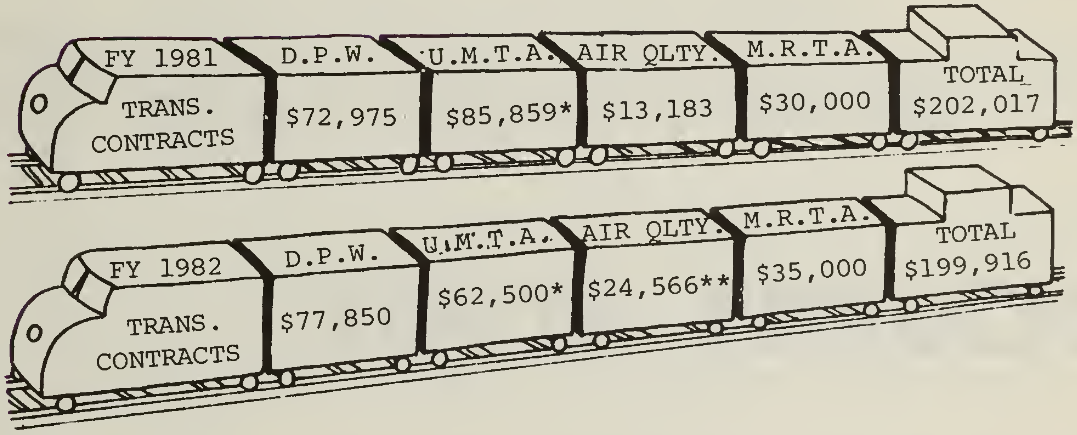
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is a key element in the regional planning process. Public involvement is absolutely necessary to ensure cooperation among communities and comprehensive approaches to regional issues. Planning is only successful when people think about the future and participate in developing and implementing plans.

The MJTC meets regularly on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the MRPC conference room. If you are interested in regional highway concerns, mass transit, rail service, or other regional transportation issues, please attend the meetings and participate in the decision making process.

The MRPC staff is also available to provide information and assistance at the MRPC office, 76 Summer Street, Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420, or by phone at 617-345-7376.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT



* Urban Mass Transportation Administration grants include a required 20% local funding match provided by the MRPC communities.

** Contract to be suspended as of June 30, 1981. Monies to be reallocated pending decision of participating agencies.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Transportation Plan was completed in November, 1979. It sets the basic transportation policy for the region and is designed to be consistent with the region's comprehensive long range land use plan, urban development objectives, and the area's overall social, economic, environmental, system performance and energy conservation goals and objectives. Air quality guidelines now also require MPOs to consider the potential for reducing transportation-related emissions in the development of plans and policies.

The plan consists of two major elements - a Long Range Element and a Transportation System Management Element. The Long Range Element defines the long range transportation needs of the region, identifies new transportation policies and facilities and major changes in existing facilities.

The Transportation Systems Management Element is designed to meet short range transportation needs. It presents low-cost, non-capital intensive improvements to the system such as traffic flow improvements, safety improvements, bikeways and carpooling programs.

The MPO has initiated the process of updating the 1979 Transportation Plan to incorporate additional information derived from the Air Quality Program, the "Investigation of Accident Causality at High Accident Locations in the Montachusett Region," the Systems Planning Project, and the Road Surface Project. Since the 1979 Transportation Plan was completed prior to institution of transit service, the Update will include an examination of transit service as it currently exists in the region and transit needs of the future. The Transportation Plan Update is scheduled for completion during the summer of 1981.

The state has initiated a process whereby they will produce a Statewide Transportation Plan for the 1980's. MRPC and other regional planning agencies will be providing assistance to the state.

ACCIDENT STUDY

Planning personnel have completed an "Investigation of Accident Causality at High Accident Locations in the Montachusett Region". This report documents by municipality those roadway sections and intersections that exhibit a high number of accidents and accompanying social costs in terms of personal injury and property damage. It also documents the vehicle-related accidents resulting in loss of life. Based on causal factors, a list of proposed improvements has been developed to decrease accident risk at each location. The MPO currently is pursuing efforts to ensure implementation of the recommended measures.

SYSTEMS PLANNING

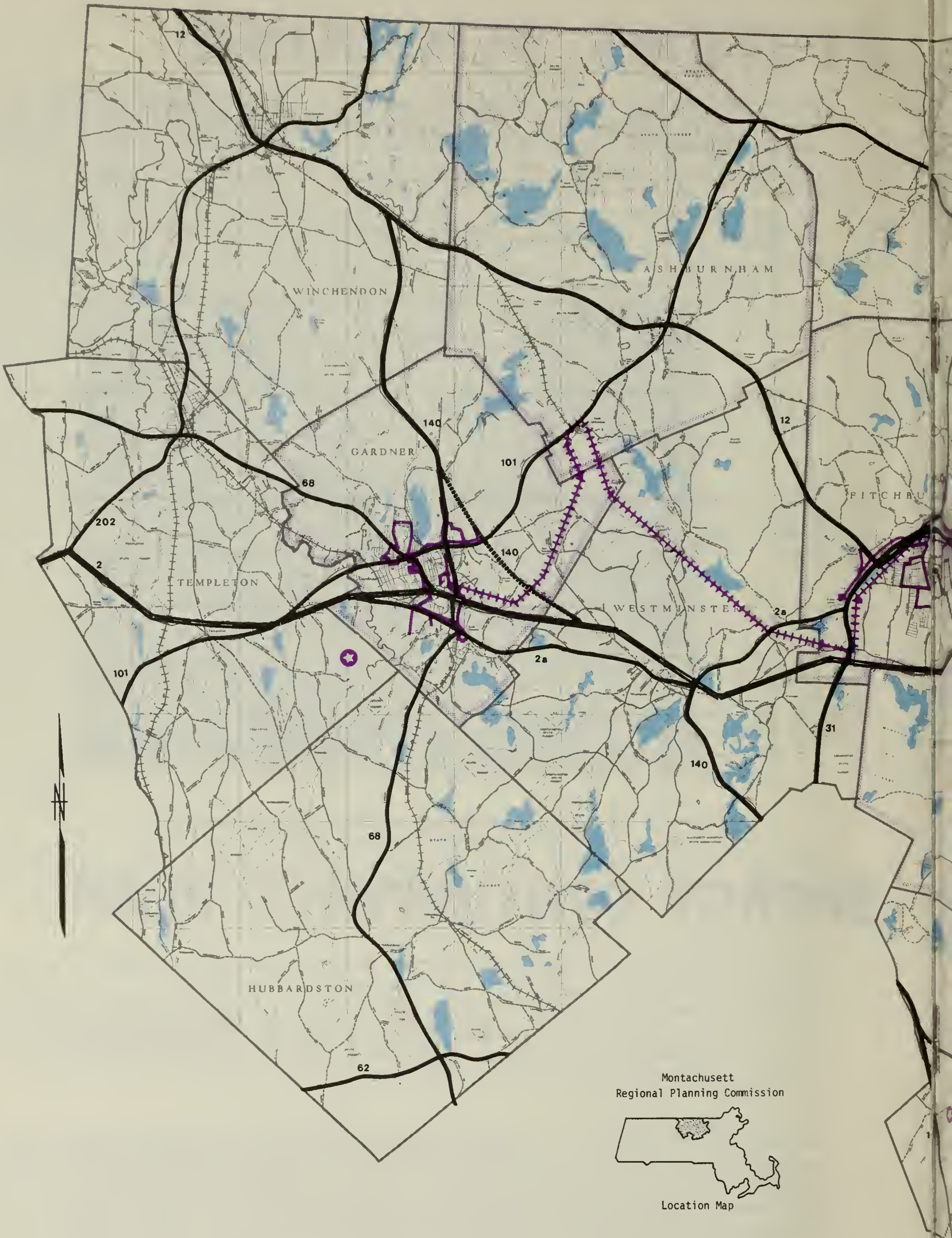
During the past year, the transportation staff, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Public Works, Bureau of Transportation Planning and Development has completed processing of the Montachusett region's highway systems planning model. MRPC is currently in the process of preparing additional documentation of the performance of the model and developing ideas for how it can best be utilized. In addition to other functions, MRPC intends to use the model to further evaluate highway performance and future highway needs.

CLOSED GAS STATION, MAIN STREET, LEOMINSTER

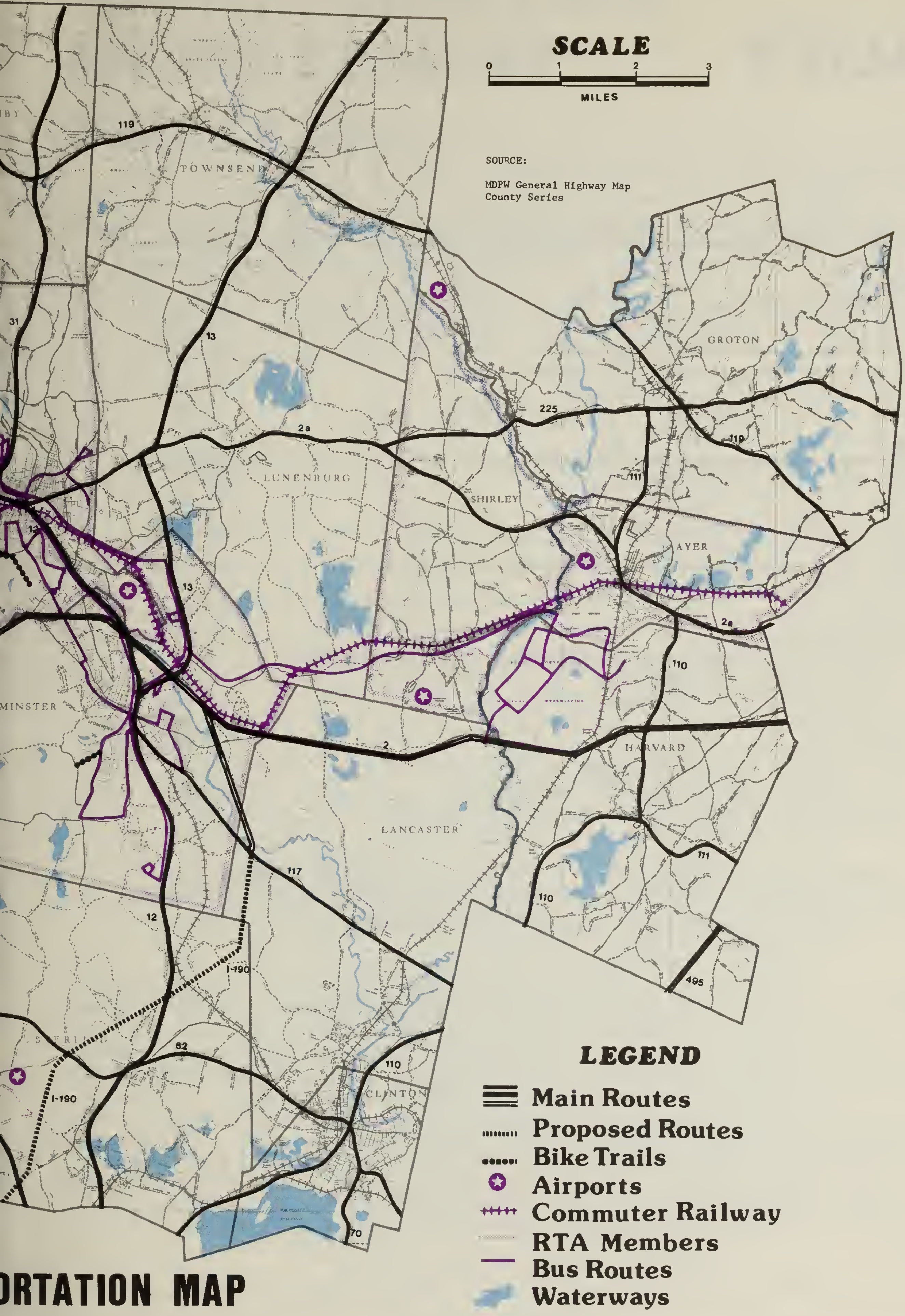
ENERGY CONTINGENCY PLAN

The 1973-1974 Arab Oil Embargo and the shortages during the summer of 1979 highlighted the need for an Energy Contingency Plan. The MRPC staff, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Public Works, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy Resources, and Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, has prepared a plan which is designed to allow the citizens of the region to cope with any future gasoline shortages with a minimum of disruption to their lives and economy.

The Energy Contingency Plan inventories transportation equipment, resources, and potential participants available for coping with an energy emergency. Public and private transportation companies, major employers, and various public agencies have been contacted to generate the information included in the report. Recommendations from the plan include expanded public awareness efforts, promotion of carpool, vanpool and transit programs, expansion of ad hoc fringe parking facilities, and institution of flextime, staggered work hours, and 4-day work weeks by employers. A cooperative atmosphere has been created enabling both the public and private sectors to work together in the interest of reducing the inevitable chaos associated with a crisis.



REGIONAL TRANS



SOURCE:

MDPW General Highway Map
County Series

ORTATION MAP

AIR QUALITY

During the past year MRPC has completed the CO Hot Spot Analysis identifying potential CO Hot Spots throughout the region. A table of results of that analysis appears below.

EIGHT HOUR CARBON MONOXIDE CONCENTRATIONS IN PARTS PER MILLION - WINTER OF 1982

	LOCATION	
1.	South Monument Square, Leominster	22.07
2.	North Monument Square, Leominster	19.78
3.	John Fitch & Lunenburg, Fitchburg	15.64
4.	N. Main, Hamilton, Lindell, Leominster	14.41
5.	Laurel, Water, Bridge, Fitchburg	14.09
6.	Moran Square, Fitchburg	13.50
7.	Depot Square, Fitchburg	13.21
8.	Main, Rollstone, Academy, Fitchburg	13.03
9.	John Fitch & Summer, Fitchburg	12.67
10.	Water & Fifth , Fitchburg	12.40
11.	Main & N. Main, Leominster	10.29
12.	Water & Bemis, Fitchburg	8.93
13.	Main, Nashua, Hamilton, Leominster	8.78
14.	Pearson, Chestnut, Elm Gardner	8.19
15.	Main & Hawes, Leominster	8.05
16.	Main & Brook, Clinton	7.96
17.	N. Main, Washington, Grove, Leominster	7.88
18.	Merriam & Lindell, Leominster	7.84
19.	Mass. Ave. (Rte. 2A) & Chase (Rt. 13), Lunenburg	7.11
20.	Central, Lancaster, Union, Leominster	6.99
21.	Summer & Harvard, Fitchburg	6.98
22.	Main, Timpany, Emerald, Gardner	6.54
23.	River, Wallace, Daniels, Kimball, Fitchburg	6.07
24.	Parker, Main, Central, W. Lynde, Richard, Gardner	6.07
25.	High & Church, Clinton	6.03

The Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (DEQE) is applying a more sophisticated method to some of the locations which are expected to exceed the standard (9 ppm-8 hour average). It is anticipated that this will reduce the number of locations that will require action.

An evaluation of the need for additional emission reductions in the region has been completed. It was determined that existing progress and planned statewide progress appear to be sufficient to reduce emissions to meet the December 31, 1982 deadline. Based on that conclusion, the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission has requested suspension of further activities on its current air quality contract after June 30, 1981. We are awaiting the decision of state and federal agencies as to how to reallocate the remaining monies. In the spring of this year the preliminary screening of Reasonable Available Control Measures (RACM's) was completed. The Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) prioritized screened actions based on the evaluation of several factors including political and institutional feasibility, cost effectiveness, and emissions reduction. The established priorities will be used in the future to prioritize implementation actions for projects having air quality benefits.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The TIP is a compilation of improvements slated for implementation in the upcoming year. The proposed projects are recommended for development and given a regional priority by local, regional and state planning participants. This process is performed through the MJTC and is carried out on a continuing basis. Prioritization reflects the Region's need for particular transportation improvements. Project action phases include: Corridor Planning Studies, Preliminary Engineering (preparation of Plans & Estimates), Right-of-Way Acquisitions and Construction.

OVERALL REGIONAL PRIORITIES TIP 1981

The Federal Fiscal Year 1981 TIP lists the following Overall Regional Priorities:

Priority	Project Description - Location
1	Route 2 Reconstruction - Fitchburg - Leominster - Westminster
2	Route 140 Reconstruction - Westminster
3	Access Improvements to Route 2 - Fitchburg - Leominster
4	Route 101 Reconstruction - Templeton
5	Clinton Connector - Clinton - Lancaster - Sterling
6	Ayer Rd., (Rtes. 110/111) Reconstruction - Harvard
7	Route 68 Study - Hubbardston
8	Barre Rd., Reconstruction - Templeton
9	John Fitch Hwy. Extension - Fitchburg
10	Harvard St., Reconstruction - Leominster
11	Route 119 Reconstruction - Ashburnham - Ashby
12	Routes 2A/111 Improvements Study - Ayer
13	Route 12 Improvements - Fitchburg - Leominster
14	Route 31 Improvements - Fitchburg
15	Route 101 Improvements - Gardner
16	Route 68 Reconstruction - Gardner
17	Route 13 Improvements - Leominster
18	Route 2A Improvements - Westminster
19	Route 140 Reconstruction - Sterling
20	Routes 12/202 Intersection Improvements - Winchendon
21	Groton - Shirley Road, Improvements - Ayer
22	Fisher Rd., Reconstruction - Fitchburg
Special	MRTA Bus Transit Operating Assistance - Fitchburg - Leominster

AIRPORTS

Air service facilities are provided to the Montachusett Region at six airports, with the most active being Fitchburg Municipal Airport. The airport serves local and regional business groups, recreational flyers, and has a flight instruction school. The Fitchburg Airport handles approximately 68,000 flights per year. The Fitchburg Airport Commission has engaged a consultant with the aid of federal funds to undertake a Master Plan Study. The Master Plan will be completed in June and a public hearing will be held.

The intent of the Master Plan is to outline the airport needs for the next ten year period through 1990 and to investigate the role of the airport in the statewide system. Based upon that information, the plan will develop a capital improvement program for the ten year period and attempt to identify sources of funding and impacts on the airport operating budget. The plan also suggests additional land use control strategies for Fitchburg and abutting communities to protect, preserve and enhance operational needs of the airport.

As for other airports in the region, the Moore Army Airfield at Fort Devens in Ayer is used solely for military operation and flight training. The Gardner Municipal Airport is used primarily for recreational and business flights, as are the Sterling and Groton airports. The Shirley airport is used by business and personal flights, as well as by a flight instruction school.

SMALL PLANE AT FITCHBURG MUNICIPAL AIRPORT, FITCHBURG

BIKEWAYS

Phase I and Phase II of the Fitchburg Parkhill/Coggshall Bikeway Project have been completed. The Town of Harvard has also constructed several Class III (on street) and one Class I (separate pathway) bikeways. No other community in the region has implemented a bikeway proposal. However, as the cost of other modes of transportation increases, the attractiveness of the bicycle for commuting, shopping, personal business, and recreation also increases. The responsibility of bikeway planners is to provide for the safety and security of bicycle riders.

MRPC has requested funding from the Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW) to prepare a regional bikeway plan. The bikeway plan would assess the current and potential facilities and programs to meet that need.

ABANDONED RAIL STATION, LANCASTER DEPOT, LANCASTER

RAIL SERVICE

Extensive freight service is provided to the Montachusett Region by the Boston and Maine Corporation, with the Consolidated Rail Corporation and the Providence and Worcester Railroad serving in a lesser capacity. Commuter passenger service from Acton to Boston has been extended westward into the Montachusett Region to the City of Gardner. (See Commuter Rail).

COMMUTER TRAIN AT FITCHBURG DEPOT, FITCHBURG

COMMUTER RAIL

In January 1980, the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) contracted with the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) to have its operator the Boston and Maine Railroad provide commuter rail service to the Montachusett Region. MART has consistently maintained that it will continue to support commuter rail service to the Montachusett Region so long as the local share of costs is substantially state supported. Service includes stops at Ayer, Gardner, Fitchburg, North Leominster, Littleton and Shirley.

In March of 1980 and in April of 1981, MART/MRPC staff surveyed riders to determine origin, frequency of use, and trip purposes as a basis for future decision making regarding service improvements. In March 1980 the train was serving over 350 daily riders. In April 1981 average weekday commuter rail ridership was 450 riders, a substantial increase over the previous year. The share of passengers originating from Transit Authority communities has increased from 33% to 57%. Fitchburg remains the largest single contributor to ridership providing for 13% of riders followed closely by Ayer providing 12.5% and Leominster with 12%. Pass utilization has also increased. Currently, 55% of all riders are using passes over last year's 43%.

Two new commuter rail programs were initiated during the past year. In October 1980 a "Family Plan" fare became effective offering substantial discounts. In December 1980, with the cooperation of the MBTA, the Transit Authority instituted a Ski Massachusetts project to generate the public's interest in utilizing mass transit for skiing and recreational purposes in the Montachusett Region. MART worked with the private enterprises of two local ski areas, Mount Wachusett and Mount Watatic. Shuttle buses transported train passengers to the ski areas on Saturdays during the winter season. People utilizing the service were awarded a discount daily fare at the ski areas in addition to discounts on lessons and equipment rental.

MASS TRANSIT

The Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MRTA) was formed on August 7, 1978 by the cities of Fitchburg, Leominster, and Gardner. Ashburnham, Ayer, and Shirley have since become members. On July 30, 1979 service to the Fitchburg/Leominster area was implemented. The Gardner bus service began May 5, 1980. Special service is provided to the elderly and handicapped through use of lift-equipped vans.

Updating the Transit Development Program (TDP) this past year included a comprehensive review of the total MART system. Recommendations from the TDP update are being reviewed by the transit authority and will be implemented as appropriate. Several route maps have been published and distributed.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap in any program receiving federal assistance. The MRPC staff prepared a Transition Plan for MART. In December, 1980, the Plan was unconditionally approved by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).

MRPC staff also provides planning assistance to MART through preparation of capital improvement and operational grant applications. This past year planning assistance also included preparation of bid specifications for four Advance Design buses, eight two-way radios and communications equipment, and one compact bus.

Media advertisements and news releases were prepared as part of the Transit Marketing Study. Joint marketing programs were developed between MART and local business merchants in Fitchburg, Leominster and Gardner. Artwork and a painting scheme were developed for the new RTS-II buses. Also, artwork was prepared for special programs such as the Fort Devens service and Ski Massachusetts program. And finally, a week long celebration of MART's first year anniversary of service.

MART BUSES, MAIN STREET, FITCHBURG

FUTURE CONCERNS

INTERMODAL TRANSFER FACILITY

At the request of local officials, MRPC has requested funding from the Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW) and will be requesting funding from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) to perform an Intermodal Transfer Facility Study. The purpose of this study will be to identify the feasibility of implementing an intermodal transfer facility in the Fitchburg central business district. If funding is approved by both the MDPW and UMTA, the study will begin the first part of calendar year 1982.

PYRAMID MALL IMPACT STUDY

At the request of local communities, MRPC has requested funding from the MDPW to conduct a study to evaluate the traffic impacts of the proposed Pyramid Mall development. Upon approval of the funding request, the traffic impact study will begin during the fall of 1981.

VEHICLE OCCUPANCY STUDY

MRPC has requested funding from the MDPW to conduct a vehicle occupancy study at selected locations throughout the region. This study will include an on-going monitoring effort. The data collected will be used in evaluating system performance improvements and identifying additional energy conservation measures.

TRAVEL TIME STUDY

MRPC has requested funding from the MDPW to perform a Travel Time Study. The purpose of this study will be to evaluate travel time in major corridors serving each of the region's cities central business districts. This study will also include an on-going monitoring effort.

PLANNING DATA / FORECAST REVIEW

This task is dependent upon the availability of complete 1980 socio-economic census information. MRPC will use census data to update their data base and evaluate MRPC forecasts, and to the extent necessary, make revisions. This task is also contingent upon funding from the MDPW and UMTA.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) SIGNATORIES

EOTC	James Carlin, Secretary
MDPW	Dean Amidon, Commissioner
MRPC	Donald Royea, Chairman
MRTA	David Gilmartin, Chairman

MONTACHUSETT JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (MJTC) OFFICERS

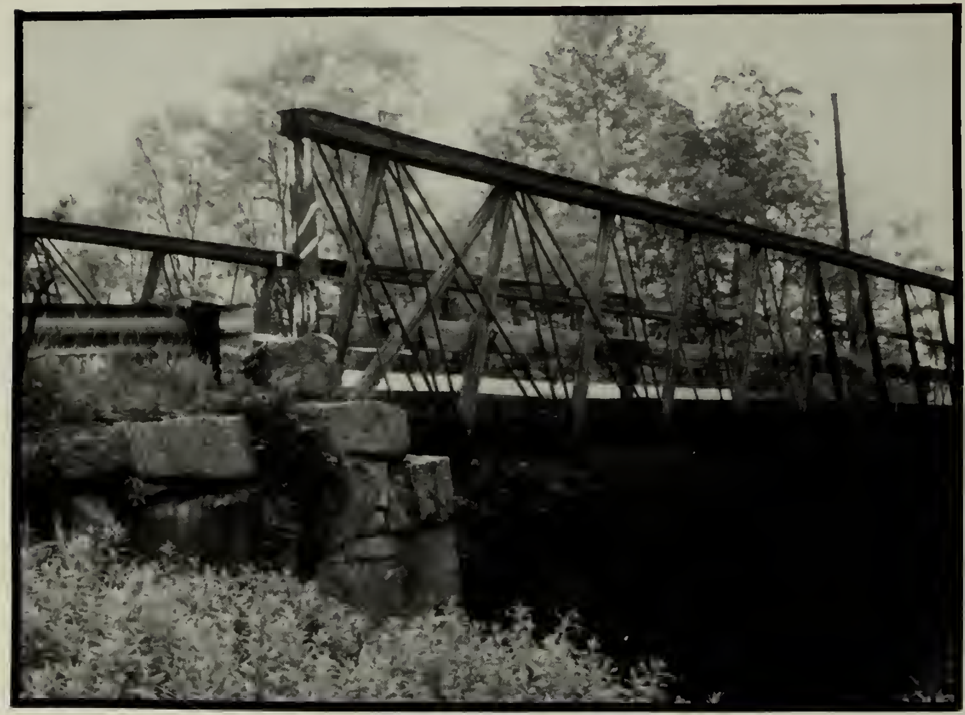
CHAIRMAN	William Murrah	Leominster
VICE CHAIRMAN	Joyce Huff	Fitchburg
SECRETARY	Dorothy Rockwell	Sterling

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC) OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN	Donald Royea	Winchendon
VICE CHAIRMAN	Nathaniel Dexter	Lancaster
SECRETARY	Walter Rolf	Templeton
TREASURER	Joyce Huff	Fitchburg
ASSISTANT TREASURER	Dorothy Rockwell	Sterling

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRPC)

Director	Mohammed H. Khan
Assistant Director	Dana Woodbury
Regional Planner IV	Glenn Rowland
Regional Planner III	Kathleen Kelley
Regional Planner II	Sandra Frodin



ATHERTON BRIDGE, E. GEORGE HILL ROAD, LANCASTER

The Atherton Bridge, E. George Hill Road, Lancaster was the town's first iron bridge and was named for James Atherton, one of the signers of the petition for the incorporation of the town. It incorporates many design features of the Post truss bridge design.